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The Price of Irish Economic Development

by JOSEPH FOYLE

Realism also demands an awareness that, at present, and for a long time ahead, the material reward for work here may be less than that obtainable elsewhere but that there are many countervailing advantages in living in Ireland.

Economic Development, Ch. 1, Par. 12

IN other words, according to Mr Whitaker, we Irish cannot count on our national resources to enable us all to enjoy high living standards, in the modern sense. But, he reminds us, there are other sources of enjoyment available to compensate for any loss. On the basis of that estimate, he concludes : ' A concerted and comprehensive programme aimed at a steady progress in material welfare, even though supported by the Churches and other leaders of opinion, could only be successful if the individual members of the community were realistic and patriotic enough to accept the standard of living produced by their own exertions here, even if it should continue for some time to be lower than the standard available abroad '. (chap. 1, par. 13) He adds : ' Otherwise, the possibility of economic progress scarcely exists '.

That is a contention of the utmost importance, surely. And yet, it is the idea in that path-breaking work which, to my knowledge, has received least attention. Usually the psychological attitude deemed necessary for Irish economic expansion is that associated with a willingness to work hard and skilfully. Now it is suggested that, not alone will we have to do that, but we will also have to be content with a full, satisfying living involving relatively moderate material pleasures and comforts.

If that contention deserves serious consideration—and its source surely leaves us with little choice in the matter—it would seem to raise two issues which, though related, may be studied separately. Firstly, is it true in fact, that is, is it based on a realistic assessment of the returns likely to accrue from using our resources to the maximum ? Secondly, if it be true, what are we going to do about it, how are we going to give it weight in our efforts to shape the Irish future ? I have given the contention much thought in the light of both those issues. The more I do so, the more I become convinced that the implications are far-reaching in the extreme. It happens that the idea in question is very

relevant to an aspect of the mood of the Irish people of 1959, the significance of which appears to be too little appreciated.

The Irish people generally would appear to be mainly concerned with the fact that our degree of economic development makes it difficult for many to enjoy the full, active life to which they think they are entitled. Those familiar with the ambitions of young people, especially, will be aware of that fact. With a frankness that can be quite disconcerting, many young people quickly make up their minds in this matter; and if they find it difficult to get what they want here, they move abroad with little hesitation. Family ties and patriotic considerations influence them little. Their attitude would appear to be: if Ireland cannot provide us with opportunities for decent living, then we'll forget about Ireland—the world is a much bigger place than this small island.

The significance of that attitude towards our poor rate of economic development would appear to be all-important. The rising generation, those who usually act the role of 'trouble-makers' to move their elders into action, are not militant in Ireland; generally they are content to abandon the country to those already in possession, if they cannot easily find scope for full living, with little thought for the national consequences left in their trail. To the usual psychological approach to the effect that hard, skilful work is needed, they reply: we don't mind working hard, but what returns can we expect? They are primarily concerned with having scope for full, joyous living. Whether we like it or not, therefore, we must relate our thinking about Irish economic development to the scope for full, satisfying living which will be available in Ireland as we exploit our national resources to the limit. That is why Mr Whitaker's contention would seem to be of fundamental importance.

Of the two issues arising from that contention, the second one is, of course, the more important from the viewpoint of taking practical steps to deal with our national problems. The need to consider it, however, derives from the answer to the first question being in the affirmative, so I shall concern myself here with dealing with that first issue. It will be time enough to tackle the second issue, when we have agreed on the answer to the first question.

* * * * *

The background against which the contention must be considered is one with which all Irish people are familiar. It comes to mind readily as we contemplate the outstanding feature of the Ireland of 1959: the co-existence of unexploited natural resources and a declining population. In some respects Irish resources have been developed to an outstanding degree, with the result that we have an infra-structure of political stability, highly-developed commercial power and transport facilities, which is first-class by modern standards. But the fact still

remains that huge tracts of farmlands are far from being fully exploited, when one considers the potentialities which are manifestly being allowed to lie dormant. The declining population, on the other hand, does not stem from the absence of a natural increase in population, with which in fact we are provided to the extent of about 27,000 annually. It arises from the fact that there is a continuous net outflow of people from this country, which seldom fails to exceed the figure for the natural increase by at least 10,000 annually.

The question which those who contributed to the survey in *Economic Development* asked was : can we bring about a greater rate of economic development by exploiting our resources more intelligently? They answered it by examining thoroughly the various types of economic activity found in Ireland, adding where possible suggestions calculated to lead to further activity. Accompanying those suggestions is to be found the all-important assertion that development depends on the Irish people adopting the psychological attitude already referred to here. It is necessary to examine the assertion closely.

Mr Whitaker makes the obvious, if seldom considered, point that ' no plan could in any circumstances guarantee full employment at whatever standard of living the employees chose to name '. (ch. 24, par. 3) In other words, the type of living we could expect to enjoy by staying in Ireland would be related to the potentialities of our resources and not to arbitrary standards based on conditions in other countries. Only after examining those potentialities could an estimate be made of the type of living which those exploiting the resources could hope to enjoy. In the case of this examination, an estimate emerges with two very significant features.

One is that for maximum development, what are commonly called ' material ' satisfactions would play a smaller part in our type of satisfying living than they play in the type of living at present favoured abroad, in Britain or the United States, for instance. Mr Whitaker does not attempt to calculate the difference even roughly, but that progress in exploiting our resources demanded such a gap is suggested in the passages already quoted. At present, as he points out, ' proximity to and ease of intercourse with Britain tend to set, at British levels, the expected standards for Irish wages and salaries, private consumption and services generally, irrespective of differences in natural resources and productivity.' (chap. 2, par. 7) His point, therefore, is that we would have to go against that tendency, by having our own standards as criteria for satisfying living, if we wished to secure economic progress. He stresses, of course, that if the material rewards would be relatively less substantial in Ireland, there would be other satisfactions by way of compensation.

The second feature of the estimate relates to the duration of such acceptance of smaller material rewards. In that respect Mr Whitaker

is cautious, and somewhat equivocal. As quoted already, he says that it may be necessary ' for some time ', and, again, ' for a long time ahead '. Elsewhere he says that ' output in Ireland does not suffice—and however much improved may never suffice—to support British standards [of living] '. (chap. 2, par. 7) Yet, he optimistically declares : ' It is not unreasonable to hope that sufficient advance can be made in the next decade not merely to consolidate our economic independence but to enable us to provide higher material standards for a rising population '. (chap. 1, par. 19) Significantly, though, he avoids comparing those ' higher standards ' with British standards. The probability is that they will continue to be lower, and he admits that ' it is possible that even this maximum development [i.e. estimated in the study] may not provide a permanent job at the wages he is prepared to accept for everyone wanting to stay in Ireland. ' (chap. 24, par. 1) Even his cautiously optimistic concluding remarks[1] leave the issue of future relative standards undiscussed.

For practical purposes, therefore, it would appear that Mr Whitaker considers the curbing of the demand for material rewards to be much more than a short-term affair. Its termination would be so indefinite that we would have to face being permanently out-of-step, as it were, with our neighbours in wealthier lands in that respect. This means that if the Irish people continue to insist on enjoying life, with material satisfactions at least on a par with those available in Britain or elsewhere, then further economic development will not take place, and we can expect further national depopulation with its accompanying problems. That is the prospect before us in Ireland—if this contention is correct. The truth of the assertion is a matter for economists and others familiar with Irish economic conditions to decide upon. Those who contributed to the investigations made for *Economic Development*—and the impressive array of names mentioned in par. 20 of chap. 1 indicates that every effort was made to bring the ' advice and comments ' of all possible authorities to bear in the scrutiny—answer in the affirmative, or at least any opinions to the contrary did not persuade Mr Whitaker to pronounce otherwise.

* * * * *

For my own part, I think that the assertion is substantially correct. In the first place, with the basic contention that our material living conditions are, on average, lower at present than those available abroad,

[1] ' However, making all allowances for the indeterminacy of the available information, there is good reason to believe that, if the proposals were adopted, the rate of increase in the volume of gross national product could, in time, be doubled, which would double real national income in 35 years. While this figure is subject to many reservations, it is clear that, if it could be achieved, we wou'd have made substantial progress in reducing unemployment and the flow of emigration, and in increasing employment and the living standards of our people '. (chap. 24, par. 43).

there can be little disagreement. We are all aware of the greater prosperity obtaining in many foreign places, and the income-per-head statistics presented by Mr Whitaker[1] confirm that personal impression emphatically. It is true that many skilled workers, professional people, salaried employees and business executives enjoy incomes and living conditions on a par with their counterparts abroad. Yet, so great is the proportion of Irish people in cities, provincial towns and rural areas in receipt of relatively low earnings, that the overall national average *per capita* income is very low, by international standards.

As an aside, it should be noted that economic development as it is taking place at present in Ireland is already accompanied by a psychological attitude very closely related to that deemed necessary for future progress. The people are disposed towards working fairly hard, and yet they are content with relatively moderate material rewards as a result of their exertions. It is true that they could work much harder, if they shed some of the easy-going habit that is often supposed to be peculiar to the Irish. The remarkable thing, though, is that so many are content to stay in Ireland, despite the relatively poor material rewards they are enjoying. Many would seem, therefore, to appreciate what in fact is the case—that there are sources of enjoyment in Ireland that all the money in the world cannot purchase for Irish people living abroad.

Yet, in the second place, it would appear that people living in Ireland are becoming increasingly conscious of the part modern, material satisfactions can play in making life exciting and enjoyable. As a result, they are demanding such satisfactions. At the same time, their appreciation of enjoyments to be derived from other quarters would appear to be declining. The changed sense of values is being made manifest in many ways. We have the demand for expensive, away-from-home entertainment, with little disposition to be satisfied with evenings-at-home. No expense is spared in an attempt to attend many sports fixtures, while betting increases as a very popular pastime. At least one car for the use of every household seems to be the national ambition. Clothes are chosen for display purposes, rather than for their practical usefulness. The emphasis on being warm and comfortable is a far cry from the hardy Irish of not so long ago. Houses built, furnished and decorated in modern style, with the latest cooking appliances and gadgets, seem to be the goal

[1] 'An introductory idea of our relative economic position is afforded by the assessment that, according to the generally accepted basis of comparison, the average income per head of the population is roughly one-half of that in Denmark and Britain, one-third of that in Canada, and one-fifth of that in the United States ; the figures for 1956, as derived from O.E.E.C. statistics, are : Ireland, $423 ; Denmark, $809 ; Britain, $909 ; Canada, $1,420 ; U.S., $2,067. An alternative assessment (by Colin Clark, in 1950) in terms of " international units per head " (of similar purchasing power) put us in a similar position but with narrower differentials—Ireland 446, Denmark 670, United Kingdom 531, Canada 847, United States 1,053. Although international comparisons of this nature are subject to considerable qualifications, it is clear that per capita income in Ireland is relatively low'.

aimed at by all, in town and country : serviceable and cosy homes no longer suffice. That change in tastes is not confined to those in Irish urban areas only. The inhabitants of rural areas are very often found preoccupied with similar ambitions, usually to the neglect of the wholesome, inexpensive enjoyments available so conveniently in the countryside.

It should be noted, however, that that tendency towards being more materialistic appears to be affecting the Irish people differently, according to their income level. It stops short at being extravagant. Many are prepared to exert themselves sufficiently to reach an income in the region of £20 a week, but after that they become indifferent. Hence we have the paradox of general labourers, small farmers, clerks and tradesmen striving to increase their earnings and impatient with the scope for doing so, while many large farmers, professional people and business executives are not materially ambitious enough to seek more scope for increasing their earnings. As the vast majority of the Irish people command earnings well below £20 a week, however, it can be said that the Irish people as a whole are striving towards material standards of living at present beyond their reach.

In the third place, there is the crucial question : can Irish resources be exploited to enable Irish people to retain such material ambitions, and yet live in Ireland, or must many go abroad to enable the Irish at home and abroad to live in the desired style ? Diligent, intelligent work enables many Irish people at home and abroad to enjoy high material standards now. If we all adopted that attitude, would the results be similar in our individual cases ? Before answering, we must examine the national resources to be exploited, just the same as a jockey examines the merits of his mount with a view to estimating his winning prospects. We must examine the inadequacies inherent in our resources, our geographical location and our export markets. Then we must estimate realistically the earnings likely to accrue to those engaged in the farming, manufacturing, merchanting, catering (for tourists, native and foreign), fishing, forestry and mining operations involved in exploiting those resources. And the verdict would appear to be : if all the Irish people insisted on enjoying modern living standards and worked with determination for that purpose, they would find themselves involved in a most vicious struggle among themselves for the limited rewards available. The result would likely be Irish people enjoying high material standards —but they would be scattered all over the globe while doing so, with an even smaller proportion than at present enjoying the luxury of possessing such standards in Ireland. What kind of pain would be involved in the transitional period, and what kind of Ireland would remain at the end—those details are best left to the imagination.

Supporting that general verdict adequately calls for a detailed study of the various branches of present Irish economic activity. That cannot

be attempted here, obviously. Mr Whitaker had the opportunity to do so in the course of the investigation he conducted, but, unfortunately, apart from the general assertions already quoted and a reference to industrial wages and salaries in particular[1], he did not show explicitly in each case that the curtailing of material ambitions was a necessary precondition for further progress.

As matters stand, however, it is obvious that if those thousands of Irish people at present existing on low incomes decided overnight to look for the wherewithal to enjoy higher material living standards, they would not find the means locally ; there simply isn't scope for such earnings in Irish farming, manufacturing, or other branches of economic activity at present. Of course, future changes may bring such a scope into being, and for that reason the question can never be answered with finality. Changes have taken place since the publication of the *Economic Development,* but they have, if anything, confirmed rather than cast doubt upon the general verdict reached in that work. The changes affecting trading groups in Europe, for example, have made it less easy for Irish exporters to win Continental markets, and have made Ireland less attractive to foreign investors. The situation with regard to the prospects for selling farm produce surplus to home needs has been brilliantly outlined in the series of *Reports* issued by the Advisory Committee on the Marketing of Agricultural Produce : they offer little foundation for thinking that we can sell the surplus in a way which will provide us all with scope for higher earnings. So, though future changes for the better are always a possibility, it seems that in the light of those changes at present foreseeable, our verdict must stand.

Because, therefore, of the difficulties inherent in our resources, we cannot all afford to aim at higher living standards as is now fashionable and yet have further economic development. Indeed, unless we lower our ambitions, our present level of development cannot be maintained, for it depends on the fact that so many Irish people are willing to stay in Ireland despite being dissatisfied with the living standards within their reach. According as that dissatisfaction grows, as it is growing, they can be expected to move abroad in search of easier ways to improve their lot, than by fighting for better conditions at home. It is remarkable, incidentally, that, though unaware of the real reasons for the fact, most of those with low incomes in Ireland seem to assume almost instinctively that, apart from the troublesome way of taking it from those in possession, there is no worthwhile scope for higher earnings in Ireland, as agitators

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[1] ' The opportunity for the expansion of industrial production and employment will not be fully realised unless labour costs per unit of output are low enough to make the product competitive in world markets. To ensure competitive costs per unit of output it may be necessary to accept for a time lower wage rates than in Britain, however efficiently production may be organised or however modern the capital equipment may be.' (chap. 3, par. 14)

and enthusiastic politicians have found to their chagrin. The probability, therefore, is that unless they are persuaded to lower their living standard ambitions, they will frustrate efforts at further economic development and even reverse somewhat the advance already made.

Finally there is the question of precisely what living standards would be needed to replace those now fashionable. The short answer is that it depends on the standards with which we Irish would be satisfied. According as we lowered our standards with regard to things material, there would be reprecussions affecting every aspect of Irish economic activity, thereby shaping the pattern of economic development. Many more would enjoy living in rural areas enjoying the inexpensive yet substantial comforts available there, and enabling farmers to work without hindrance from labour shortages and high labour costs. Manufacturers and employers generally would benefit from the new attitude towards wages, just as they would adjust their products to cater for the new tastes of the Irish people. All such adjustments would follow in the train of the new standards with which the Irish people would be contented. In the old economics textbook phrase, 'the consumer is king', and if the Irish people asserted their superiority by altering their standards of living to those deemed acceptable to them, their wishes would have the effect of transforming the whole process of Irish economic development, as supplies hurried to cater for their needs.

The critical issue, of course, is what standards would be desirable and acceptable. To that issue I shall return in my concluding remarks. For the moment I shall content myself with making two points. Firstly, to secure maximum use of our resources, in the altering of our material standards, we would have to develop a strong bias in favour of goods made from native resources, without being hypercritical of the efforts made to cater for our needs in that way. We would press for improvements, but we would not insist that the products would compare favourably in price or quality with similar products made under more favourable conditions abroad. That is an obvious point, though Mr Whitaker did not refer to it. Secondly, the contentment with the different standards would have to be reflected in the lives of all Irish people, if we were to secure the maximum economic development possible. Apart from the tantalizing influence stemming from the higher standards being enjoyed by acquaintances, there would be less development obviously, if, say, only those with little wealth and little talent were content to make-do with the new standards, and those more gifted decided to remain free to move in pursuit of higher standards. The fashion in favour of the new standards would have to be popular among all types of Irish people, employers and employees, rich and poor, the intelligent and the not-so-intelligent.

It should be clear from the foregoing that I find the necessity to

agree with Mr Whitaker's contention inescapable. Like him, I find that ' the question of the acceptability of living standards is, therefore, of critical importance '. (chap. 2, par. 8) As a result, the second issue—what are we going to do about it ?—is of very practical relevance at the present juncture in Irish history. The alternative routes lying before us are very clear. We can, on the one hand, continue as at present with high material living standards as our aim, and deal with the consequences as best we can. On the other hand, we can set up new standards with less emphasis on modern material satisfactions, and adjust our living and all our economic activities accordingly.

The problem is not peculiarly Irish, of course. The world-wide quest for higher material living standards, which is an outstanding feature of modern history, is leading to a big displacement of populations, as people move from the countryside to the industrial areas where such standards are more easily within reach. Signs of that resettlement are to be found in America, Asia, and Africa no less than in Europe. It is most apparent in the long-settled European countries, as the desertion of rural areas leaves unutilized the homesteads, gardens and amenities so much prized in another age. The intensity of the disturbance varies with the degree to which potentialities for modern manufacturing are available locally. When such suitable resources are available inside national boundaries, as they are in, say, Germany or France, the movement is from rural to urban areas with no net fall in the national population as a whole. We in Ireland are not favoured with appreciable quantities of such resources, so that in common with the inhabitants of many English, Scottish and Welsh rural areas, we are losing people to the large industrial areas of Great Britain and other parts of the English-speaking world. The gap between material aspirations and the wherewithal to satisfy them is not peculiar to Ireland. Millions all over the globe have to contend with it. Even in Britain where the average working man's weekly wage is just over £13, more than nine million workers are getting £8 a week or less. In fact, our present Irish material conditions compare very favourably with those of millions outside the principal industrial areas in the world. It would appear to be a case, though, of the more we have the more we want, as we Irish appear to be more conscious than others of the need to improve material living conditions.

The issue before us, therefore, is whether we in Ireland are going to go against that world trend, and set up our own special living standard aims in Ireland, or fall in line with current fashion. It is only fair to point out that it is possible to deal with the problems arising from the consequences—the frustrating of economic development and the accompanying fall in the population total—of embarking on that second route. The personal anguish arising from the fact of thousands having to sever

connections with native places and adjust themselves to living in unfamiliar surroundings, while those remaining strive to mend the fabric rent by their absence ; the national difficulties arising from the growing proportion of the very old and very young in the population, from the difficulty in maintaining a desire for political independence and cultural distinctness in the face of the need for many to go abroad to satisfy their needs, and from the necessity to meet our public expenditure and debt-servicing commitments on the basis of a declining population total ; the religious problems stemming from the difficulty involved in preserving a love for things religious in the face of material worries, from the temptations to be disloyal to their Faith facing the Irish who go abroad, and from the impact of the whole process on Irish missionary operations—all those problems would arise in the future, as they have arisen to some degree already. We could deal with them intelligently and make the best of the situation. Various expedients might have to be adopted—e.g. less emphasis on the value of peculiar cultural features like the Irish language, and a readiness to integrate our economy more closely with that of Great Britain—to secure an orderly adjustment. Indeed, we would appear to be making such adjustments at present, wittingly or unwittingly.

It would be necessary to consider many points before deciding that one route was more desirable than the other. For instance, from the viewpoint of the Irish nation, which would be the better ? With the supernatural welfare of the Irish people in question, which course would be advisable ? Above all, if we thought the new standards the more desirable, could we muster the leadership, self-sacrifice and self-discipline needed to inspire the Irish people in their efforts to be different from their contemporaries despite the many influences to the contrary, and secure the corresponding adjustment in our economic affairs in an orderly manner ? All those questions are relevant. But I am not going to attempt to deal with them here. I can only bring to mind again the fact that the young people, whose quest for full, joyous living was noted in the early part of this essay, wait impatiently for an answer. As far as they can see now, we are content to move down the road of least resistance, falling in with the modern trend towards higher material living standards. Unless they are encouraged to think otherwise, therefore, they will continue to react as they are reacting now.

The points raised in this last section are of great practical significance. But they are made only to stress the importance of the discussion of Mr Whitaker's contention which I attempted in the other sections. The fascinating problems involved in that second issue need to be considered separately. For the moment, it would seem to be better to make up our minds regarding the truth or otherwise of the fundamental assertion. Am I right in saying that it is true ?

Irish Agriculture: Prospects And Opportunities

by DAVID O'MAHONY

WITHIN the next ten to twenty years the demand for agricultural products in the United States may outstrip production. If it does the deficiency will have to be made good by imports so that the United States may emerge as a large food importer. Demand for food there is growing very rapidly by reason of the continuously rising standard of living of its people and especially by reason of the tremendous expansion of its population. At present, population is growing at the rate of about three million a year and as time goes on the annual addition to the total population will probably become even greater. Production is rising, too, but the rate of decline of the agricultural population is very high and it may eventually outweigh the rate of increase in output per head with the result that total output may fall. Mr Colin Clark estimates that this will happen by the 1970's ; he maintains that the present food surpluses in the United States will therefore prove to be only temporary embarrassments.[1]

As the United States is very large, its imports will be on a very large scale and will therefore affect the markets for agricultural products throughout the world and will tend to alter the pattern of world trade. Agricultural prices will tend to be kept buoyant and indeed may possibly even rise in terms of other prices because there will be far more competition among the importing countries for the available supplies. Britain will cease to be the one great food importer. No longer will the exporting countries vie with each other in seeking an entry into the British market and no longer will Britain be able to obtain her imported food at the lowest possible prices. Food prices in Britain will therefore tend to be relatively higher than they have traditionally been in the past.

In many countries, such as those in the Far-East, population and with it the need for food is increasing rapidly too, but the world markets remain unaffected. The reason is that in these countries people simply cannot afford to pay for imports and what happens is that they eat less as population rises. It will be quite otherwise in the case of the United States because the American people will be able to pay for the imports

[1] Colin Clark, *The Conditions of Economic Progress.* 3rd Ed., pp. 273–274.

and will not allow their standard of diet to fall. At the same time the impact of the United States on the world markets may be reinforced by the great developing countries which will be able to finance relatively larger imports as their economies develop.

Should these possibilities be realized the position of the exporting countries, including Ireland, will be altered for the better. Ireland indeed may well stand to gain considerably because the impact of the United States' demand will be mainly in products which have high labour content. Production of these would tend to contract most with the diminution of the farm population.

Changes are probable in the sphere of inter-European trade. These again could be of considerable advantage to us. Complete free trade would be the ideal from our point of view as the markets opened up to us would be virtually unlimited. We are more efficient producers than most European countries. The countries which are more efficient producers than we are account for only a relatively small part of the total European production and demand. The greater part of European production is sold at higher prices than those received by the Irish farmers ; the only reason why we do not export more to the Continent is that the Continental countries control imports in the interests of their own relatively inefficient producers. If there were free trade, a single European price level for farm products would emerge and it would almost certainly not be lower than the normal agricultural price level in Ireland. Irish producers would thus tend to be competitive. Complete free trade, of course, is not likely to emerge. However despite the failure of the recent proposals to establish a European Free Trade Area, it is virtually certain that some form of trading arrangements on a European-made basis will come into being and that they will include agriculture. Something in the nature of the managed agricultural market of the European Economic Community will probably emerge. If it is managed rationally, i.e., if agriculture in those areas where it is relatively efficient is encouraged to expand, the opportunities opened up for Irish agriculture will be very great, though less than they would be under conditions of genuine free trade.

Despite the trading opportunities that will be opened up with Europe and the United States, Britain will certainly remain our chief customer, if for no other reason than its proximity to us and our existing trading relations with it. The volume of food consumption is not likely to increase very much in Britain because the level of nutrition is already very high and also because the population is not likely to rise very much above its present level. In spite of that, however, there is every reason to think that we will be able to expand our exports there. We shall be competitive on a price basis—even in respect of products such as butter—owing to the relatively higher agricultural price level which is likely to prevail

there. The more efficient producers supplying the British market would be able to sell more cheaply than we could, but there would be no need for them to do so since they would be able to sell all they want at the prices which will prevail. Some of Britain's overseas suppliers, such as New Zealand and Australia, are also likely to direct part of their exports to other markets nearer to themselves, so that the volume of imports from these countries into Britain may be reduced. We should thus be in a position to increase our share of the British market.

The prospects, then, for agriculture are likely to be good. Unfortunately, it does not appear that we shall be able to avail ourselves of the opportunities which will be opened up to us to any great extent by way of increased production. At best output will probably continue to increase at the moderate rate at which it has been increasing over the past ten or twelve years. Even this moderate increase is in rather sharp contrast to the long-run tendency for total output to remain static. It is due to the acceleration in the rate of increase of output per head which set in in the early post-war years. Output per head is now increasing at the rate of nearly 4% per annum and this compares favourably with other European countries. An unusual number of circumstances combined to bring about this favourable rate of increase, the most important of which undoubtedly was the readiness with which most farm products could be sold at favourable prices. Thus it was worth the farmers' while to use the means available of increasing production. The long-run rate of increase of output per head is only about one-third of the recent rate.[1] Normally, long-run rates of change seem to reassert themselves after temporary alterations, such as those brought about by wars and economic crises. It would not therefore be surprising if the present rate of increase in output per head tended to fall off somewhat as time goes on. On the other hand, if the drive to increase output continues and if, as is likely, it will be possible to sell farm products at favourable prices, it could well be that something near the present rate would continue at least for the next decade or so.

The rate of increase of output per head has been very largely counterbalanced by the rate of decline in the farm population ; that is why total output has increased only moderately. Almost all countries experience a flight from the land, the reason being that income per head is almost invariably higher in the non-agricultural employments than it is in agriculture. By comparison with most countries, however, the Irish agricultural population seems to be unusually mobile. The reason is that the alternative employment opportunities available to those wishing to leave the land in Ireland are relatively much greater than those available to the agricultural population of other countries of the size of Ireland or even larger. The Irish farm population has access

[1] *ibid,* p. 265.

to employment in the non-agricultural sectors both of the Irish economy and also of Britain and the Commonwealth countries ; whereas those who leave the land in other countries as a rule have to be satisfied with employment in other sectors of their own economies. Another factor which tends to increase the mobility of the Irish agricultural population is the conacre system. In many countries farmers are probably kept on the land by the mere fact of ownership. They know they could earn more if they left the land but they consider that the advantages of owning a farm outweigh the advantages of earning a higher though perhaps a less certain income. The Irish farmer can have it both ways. He can let his land and get employment elsewhere while still retaining the ownership of his farm. The farmer can therefore be as mobile as the wage-earner. Income per head in agriculture is rising faster than average income per head in other occupations in Ireland and Britain, so that the discrepancy between what can on the average be earned on and off the land is narrowing. The gap however is still very great and it will take a long time until it is significantly reduced. The narrowing of it does at the same time hold promise of a reduction in the rate of decline of the farm population, although it would be most unrealistic to hope that it would be sufficient to make any great difference to total output. The ease with which employment can be obtained outside of agriculture by the Irish agricultural population means that the agricultural population will not be stabilized nor even the flight from the land significantly reduced until the differential between farm and non-farm incomes is eliminated or, at all events, until the farmers think it is.

Taking the increase of output per head and the behaviour of the agricultural population into account, it is unlikely that total output will increase any faster for the next decade or so than it has done for the past decade. The whole of this increase will be exported, because we appear to have reached something in the nature of a ceiling with regard to consumption of home-produced agricultural products. Since the end of the war the volume of exports has gone up about two and a half times while home consumption has remained virtually static. This reflects our high level of food consumption and our falling population. There probably has been some tendency also for imported foods to be substituted for home-produced foods and this will probably continue.

Seeing that total output will increase at only a very moderate rate, the pattern of production will be a matter of great importance. The opportunities opened up will not be availed of unless those forms of production are pursued which give the greatest return to the farmer and the economy as a whole. The farm surveys show that mixed dairy farming gives the greatest return and it is probable therefore that dairy farming will tend to expand relatively more than other types of farming.

The official Government view at present, of course, is that cattle and meat production rather than dairy farming ought to be encouraged. The view taken in the *Programme for Economic Expansion* and in *Economic Development* is that the outlook for dairy products is uncertain while that for cattle and meat is good. Even since the publication of these documents the relative position of the cattle and dairy markets has changed a great deal in favour of the latter. This may be due merely to the exceptionally dry Summer, as a result of which milk production was reduced in a number of countries. At the same time, there is evidence that the cause of the marked improvement in the dairy product market is more deep-seated. There is good reason to believe that the demand for milk for purposes other than butter production is increasing and that the increase will continue. Moreover, if the United States enters the world markets as a food importer, dairy products are certain to benefit because dairy farming, demanding greater labour, is likely to contract there. Furthermore, apart altogether from the United States it would be most unlikely that a managed European agricultural market would cause the prices of dairy products to fall below the levels which would be acceptable to the Irish farmer. Finally, in Britain itself dairy production will probably fall because it is hopelessly uneconomic whereas cattle production will probably expand. The outlook for dairy products is therefore probably much better than that envisaged in the *Programme*. This is not to say that the outlook for cattle is bad. On the contrary it is excellent, but there is nothing to indicate that the relative prices of cattle and dairy products will change in favour of the former. They would have to change very much to make the returns from cattle production greater than those on dairying. It is suggested in *Economic Development* that cattle production could be intensified and in that way returns on it could be made to exceed those on dairy farming. There is no doubt that cattle production could be intensified but so could dairying, provided that the market prospects are as envisaged here, and the returns to the farmer and the nation would be proportionally greater. It would appear then that the case for a concentration on cattle has not been well established and that the Government's decision was premature.

Full advantage of the demand for food will not be taken until we change the form of our exports. We shall have to export far more in the form, or as near the form as possible, in which the final consumer buys his foodstuffs. To an ever-increasing extent consumers are demanding food in a prepared or processed form so that a far greater proportion of the consumer's pound or dollar spent on what he regards as food goes not to the farmer but to the processor. The United States has gone further in this respect than European countries but the tendency is in the same direction all over the world. Food preparation is becoming more and more an industrial and commercial matter and less a domestic

one. In ten or twenty years' time the proportion of the consumer's pound going to the farmer will be even less than it is now. That does not mean that the farmer will suffer. All it means is that the processor is going to get more, not that the farmer is going to get less.

The implications are obvious. In the first place, the farmers can turn this tendency to their own advantage by engaging in food processing and preparation themselves either on a co-operative basis or even on the basis of a purely domestic industry. This latter would be of particular advantage in Ireland because it would give farmers' wives and daughters an economic independence and status which they have to a great extent lost since home butter-making disappeared. In the second place, where the farmers themselves cannot engage in this form of industry, other firms of enterprise ought to be encouraged to do so in order that the national economy would reap the benefit of agricultural production to the greatest possible extent.

A further development along these lines which would be highly desirable is that Irish enterprise would engage in the distribution of Irish farm exports abroad, right down to the retail level. We rarely think of distribution abroad as being a form of export, yet the profits on wholesaling and retailing in foreign countries could be a valuable aid to the Balance of Payments. There is no inherent reason why Irish enterprise could not participate in the beginning of the revolution which is now under way in the field of distribution with the emergence of the supermarket, by establishing a series of supermarkets in Britain.

A still more compelling reason for insisting on the need to change the form of our exports is the Balance of Payments situation. If agricultural products continue to be exported in the relatively unprepared and unprocessed form in which they have been exported up to now, it is most probable that the Balance of Payments will become even more precarious in the future than it has been in the past, in spite of the increase in agricultural exports. This is because of the relationship which normally prevails between agricultural income and national income on the one hand, and between national income and imports on the other ; and because of the relationship between the value of gross agricultural output and agricultural income. These relationships are such that in the present pattern an increase in agricultural exports is liable to be more than offset by an increase in imports.

Ever since the end of the war agricultural income has amounted to about three-quarters of the value of gross agricultural output, and to about 30 per cent of national income. The relationship between imports and national income has been rather erratic—the value of the former has varied between 42 per cent and 59 per cent of the value of the latter. It would probably be conservative to assume that imports in the future will amount to between 45 per cent and 50 per cent of the value of the

national income unless agricultural products are exported in a processed form. Thus if agricultural production were to increase by £50 millions, agricultural income would increase by about £37½ m. and national income by some £125 m. The whole of this increase in output would be exported, so exports would go up by £50 m. but the increased imports attributable to the expansion of national income would be in the order of £55-60 m. or even somewhat more.

It would seem then that, if equilibrium is to be maintained in the Balance of Payments, exports will have to be increased and imports decreased as compared with the national income. In other words exports will have to amount to a greater proportion and imports to a smaller proportion of the value of the national income than they have been in the past. The most promising way to bring this about would be to export food in a processed form because by doing so the value of any given volume of food exports would be greater than if it were exported in an unprocessed form and so would amount to a larger proportion of the value of the national income. Imports would also tend to decrease as compared with the national income because the import content of industrial production would be lower as a result of the use of home-produced raw materials in the food processing industries. Thus there is a Balance of Payments reason in addition to the other reasons for trying to develop industries based on home-produced raw materials.

The main inference to be drawn from the foregoing observations is that the prospects for Irish agriculture as a whole are good. There seems to be no real evidence to suggest that the future of agriculture lies in one form of production rather than another. In particular, it does not seem that the dairying industry is likely to suffer by comparison with the cattle industry. Whatever changes will occur in the pattern of world and European trade seem likely to benefit all branches of agriculture—not equally perhaps—but not to the extent of altering the relative prices of the various products to any appreciable extent. It is uncertain, in any case, in what direction relative prices would change, if they change at all. This very uncertainty, however, implies that the encouragement of one form of production rather than another is unwarranted. If output is to be encouraged to expand, it would seem that encouragement ought to be given to all forms of production without discrimination. If that were done, the individual farmer would tend to produce what would give him the best return and that in turn would give the economy as a whole the best return too, because any increase in output that takes place will be exported.

It is regrettable that the *Programme for Economic Expansion* lays so much stress on the allegedly poor outlook for dairying. It is true, of course, that the *Programme* can do nothing to compel the farmers to alter their pattern of production but at the same time it could well be very

misleading and may induce some farmers to adopt a pattern of production which is not in their own interests nor in that of the nation in the long run. One of the many great weaknesses of economic 'planning' is that the planners can make mistakes about the future but do not themselves have to bear the financial consequences of their mistakes, whereas those who conform to the plan do. Fortunately, our type of 'programming' seeks only to induce people to conform to it and, still more fortunately, the mistakes made in it have become evident, at least with regard to agriculture, before there was time for any serious damage to be done to the national economy or to individual farmers.

Collective Responsibility

REFLECTIONS ON A RECENT CATHOLIC CONGRESS[1]

by JOHN MURRAY

WE are all conscious these days that the world has grown much smaller during the past twenty years and that we are now far closer to one another : conveniently close for a business man who may have breakfast in Dublin, lunch at Rome and dinner in the Middle East or, correspondingly, breakfast in Ireland and dinner in the United States ; inconveniently close and unpleasantly so, in terms of atomic rockets. The problems of one country are no longer that country's sole concern ; they may affect and almost certainly will affect other peoples. A wealthy country is beginning to have the same uneasy qualms of conscience about a poor neighbour which an individual decent-minded Dives started to entertain about an individual Lazarus or the whole class of Lazarus a few decades back. It is impossible to live behind hermetically sealed frontiers, leaving foreigners to go to the devil in their own peculiar way. If countries have not yet reached the conclusion that the ultimate principle of good international relations is the same as the basic law of good human intercourse, namely ' Thou shalt love they neighbour as thyself ', they are at any rate becoming more acutely aware that, whether they like it or not, they are their brothers' keepers, and their own welfare and peace of mind depend upon a serious acceptance of this responsibility.

This consciousness is clear enough from the two attempts to establish an international society, after the two world wars. War has to be rejected as an instrument of policy—a result only to be achieved through an international society, towards which individual countries would accept responsibility.

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[1] The *Conversaçiones Cathólicas Internaçionales*, held at San Sebastian from 6–13 September, 1959. These *Conversaçiones* have taken place each summer since 1946 (with one exception) and they well merit the title of ' conversaçions '. Papers are prepared beforehand and sent round duplicated to the members of the congress. There are thus no lengthy lectures. Each session is introduced by a concise *rapport* from one or two speakers, and the remainder of the time available is devoted to discussion. The congress does not issue resolutions or make public statements though its proceedings are noted in some detail in the Spanish press. The present writer has attended four of these annual *conversaçiones* and found them very interesting and stimulating. He would like to express here his warm appreciation of the kindness and generosity of his Spanish hosts.

This responsibility is expressed in the our paragraphs forming the Charter of the United Nations' Organization. The member States declare it to be their purpose :

(1) to maintain international peace and security and to that end, to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace ;

(2) to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace ;

(3) to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion :

(4) to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

I have quoted these clauses in full to show that the responsibility felt by the member States of U.N.O. is not confined to disputes that might endanger the peace. It is explicitly extended to the creation of a friendly atmosphere between the peoples of the world and includes questions like a charter for individual rights (which has already been worked out and established) and co-operation in dealing with economic, social and cultural problems. Unfortunately, the news of U.N.O. activities which hits the press headlines is more frequently the failure of its Security Council to deal with major issues (for there the major Powers have a veto and Soviet Russia has become a past master in its exercise) than the many successes on a smaller scale in these various fields. The International Labour Office continues the work it began within the League of Nations, a work of study, encouragement of higher standards of wages, working conditions and amenities, and social insurance. Perhaps its most valuable contribution is the series of agreements which it urges member States to ratify and the annual reports submitted by those States to its central office. The World Health Organization has its centre in Geneva and six subsidiary centres throughout the world ; its staff, mostly medical, is more than 1,400 and the main direction of its work is the improvement of health and hygiene conditions in under-developed countries. The same emphasis is registered in another specialized organ of U.N.O., the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The sense that we are our brothers' keepers is being steadily worked out in practice by these and other

organizations forming part of U.N.O., but of whose activities there is rarely mention in the ordinary press.

And one last word concerning U.N.O. The General Assembly was originally conceived as a formal parliament of the nations that would meet only once a year. In it each State, whatever its size and potential, would have only one representative. The failure of the Security Council to tackle and solve important issues has altered the position of the Assembly. Its plenary sessions have been lengthened ; special meetings have been called to consider urgent problems. In 1947 an Interim Committee, which has come to be known as the Little Assembly, was set up in spite of strong Russian opposition. The Little Assembly was empowered to conduct investigations and to advise upon the calling of special Assembly meetings. The General Assembly has established various sub-committees. Further, it has tried to persuade members of the Security Council to compose their differences and protested against the use and even the existence of the veto of the major Powers. It has urged them to take action about disarmament. In 1946 the General Assembly inaugurated the United Nations' Commission on Atomic Energy, naming the eleven members of the Security Council plus Canada and, when the commission reported disagreement in its discussions, urged it to continue and to find a workable basis for further discussion. And, finally, in 1950, the Assembly took a certain authority into its own hands in what is known as the *Acheson Plan.* A Peace Observation Commission of fourteen members was set up and the intention is to despatch it to any centre of international trouble so as to advise the Assembly as to necessary action. Each member of U.N.O. has been asked to maintain a contingent available to serve as a U.N. unit when required. In the event of a breach of the peace, the General Assembly, if not in session, will meet in emergency session within twenty-four hours of a request being made by seven members of the Security Council or a majority of members of U.N.O. Should the position appear serious enough for U.N. action, the Assembly will recommend the collective measures to be taken by members ' including in the case of a breach of the peace or act of aggression the use of armed force when necessary '.

I have chosen to begin this consideration of Collective Responsibility with an account of U.N.O., for it is an exercise in such responsibility. War between Western countries has become a practical impossibility, apart from some local or frontier disturbance, let us say, in Central America. Should a dispute occur, they would settle it by mutual agreement or have it decided by arbitration. And the main reason is not the need to present an unbroken front to the Communist world but this new and growing sense of responsibility. Men who have worked for a considerable time at the headquarters or in one of the specialized

organizations of U.N.O. rapidly acquire an international outlook. Not only do they collaborate easily with nationals of other lands and understand their point of view ; they discover that they together have a common point of view and a common, international outlook on many of their various problems.

The value of this work, in particular the efforts of the General Assembly to make up for the relative failure of the Security Council, is well brought out by B.A. Wortley in the following passage from his recent book, *United Nations ; The First Ten Years.*

> The most encouraging feature of this whole development is the fact that the General Assembly apparently means what it says. Within a month of the resolution, the Peace Observation Committee was despatched to the Balkans. On February 1st, 1951, the General Assembly determined that Communist China had committed aggression by intervening in Korea and in May, 1951, the General Assembly recommended that its members place an embargo on the shipment of war materials to territory under the control of Communist China.
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> These examples will suffice to illustrate what is the most significant and encouraging feature of the work of the General Assembly. In marked contrast to its predecessor, the Assembly of the League of Nations, the General Assembly has shown a determination to promote the main aims and purposes of the organization and not to be prevented from so doing by legal technicalities. It has, throughout its brief history, attempted to persuade the Security Council to share its determination to produce results and where it has failed, it has devised alternative ways of bringing about the same results. On occasions this enthusiasm may have gone too far, and national policies may have been given greater freedom of expression than was proper . . . but it has been the Assembly and not the Security Council which of recent years has afforded to the world some hope of maintaining the peace and security of the world.[1]

CAN WE SPEAK OF COLLECTIVE GUILT ?

The San Sebastian *Conversaçiones* were not so directly interested in this growth in international collaboration (which in its turn reveals a growing sense of mutual responsibility) as in another and more problematic question, closely akin to it. Their subject was the possibility of a collective guilt, or, to use the expression current throughout the discussions, of a *pecado colectivo* or *péché collectif.*

The relations we have been considering in U.N.O. are inter-State relations. But what are these States but organized communities, *represented* through governments and government agencies? If a State commits an act of injustice, embarks, for instance, on a war of aggression,

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[1] pp. 93-4

to what extent can the people be said to be guilty of this act of injustice and to have committed a *péché collectif*? The question is all the more urgent where the people or the majority of the people identify themselves with their government and its unjust action by hearty co-operation. Are we to say that those citizens who realize the injustice of the action and either positively concur in it or negatively refrain from protest are guilty of individual sins of co-operation, whereas those who condemn the action interiorly incur no such guilt as indeed the great majority of the people can scarcely be supposed to do owing to their ignorance of the full situation, or is it possible to speak of a collective sin on the part of the people as a whole? It might be argued that, on the principle of extreme democracy, according to which the government represents the 'will of the people' that the people as a whole commit themselves to such government action unless they take measures to repudiate it. Is the moral responsibility of representative governments nothing more than the individual responsibility of members of that government and of those advisers and specialists who really understand the situation and identify themselves with or at least accept the government's decision? Or does the responsibility—in the case of unjust action—fall back upon the community, thus introducing the notion of a *péché collectif*?

The question was brought to a head after the second world war when the German people and not merely their Nazi leaders were held responsible for war crimes and when membership of organizations like the Nazi S.S. was judged sufficient to rank a man among war criminals apart from individual acts he may or may not have committed. The fact that Dr Adenauer has made financial reparations to Israel because of German ill-treatment of Jews on behalf of the German people and not its Nazi government lends further substance to this view that this treatment of Jews in Germany was a collective action and not merely a sum of individual actions. A similar problem might arise in the case of an unjust social system. If a certain section, controlling the administration of a country, imposes or maintains or at least tolerates a social system that is evidently unjust towards other sections of the populace, should this be regarded as a collective sin on the part of that section or is it once again the sum total of many individual moral offences?

THE JURIDICAL APPROACH

The juridical approach is sufficiently clear. A community may be punished for offences committed by its government. Dr Häussling, a German member of the San Sebastian congress, accepted the basis of the Nuremberg trials. On the grounds that the Hague Convention of 1907 had already gone back to a juridical source more fundamental than any positive legislation, namely '*les lois de l'humanité et les exigences*

de la conscience publique', he rejected the argument levelled against the Nuremberg tribunal, namely that where no positive law existed, there could be no positive accusation. This implied a rejection of juridical positivism and the recognition of something like the *jus gentium* of the older Scholastic jurists, the *naturalis ratio* or *lex naturalis* of Vitoria and Grotius. Vitoria had referred to the necessity of punishing *orbis totius auctoritate* those who had acted unjustly and his reference is to States, not individuals. Dr Häussling stressed the gradual growth in the twentieth century of this sense of offences against humanity, in clauses of the Versailles treaties, the pact of the League of Nations and the charter of U.N.O., the declaration of the rights of man and the Geneva convention for the protection of victims of war.[1]

International law and this wider *conscience publique* accept the position that the citizens of a country may properly be penalized for unjust acts perpetrated by their governments. They may have to submit to a collective penalty. But does this imply a collective moral guilt?

Père Bonnichon, S.J., of the French review *Études*, while admitting the notion of a collective penalty, was extremely loath to entertain the idea of collective guilt or *péché collectif*. He analysed some possible cases.

A group of men might be declared criminal, for instance, a band of rebels or violators of the law or the Nazi S.S. But the reason for this, he considered, was their adhesion to the group which in itself was a grave but individual moral fault. The root of their criminality was thus individual and not collective. Again, members of a company of soldiers are presumed responsible for certain collective acts, for example, a massacre in a village, where it is impossible to allot individual responsibility. There exists a juridical presumption that all are guilty unless individuals can prove their innocence. A law of this kind is criticized on the grounds that it contravenes the general principle that a man is innocent until he is shown to be guilty but it can be justified by exceptional circumstances. The action is regarded as collective because it does not presuppose in each individual case a sinful attitude. Yet this remains a juridical decision in special circumstances, not a moral assessment.

A responsibility may exist on the part of a large and diversified section of the population for a class of social actions that are unjust. Père Bonnichon denies here a collective penal responsibility but suggests a civil responsibility such as exists between States. He appears to tone down the juridical responsibility of which we have spoken when he

[1] The letter of Pope Benedict XV sent in 1917 to the heads of belligerent nations declared that 'the moral force of Right must be substituted for the material force of arms' and laid down the following condition: 'as a substitute for armies (there must be) the institution of arbitration with its high peace-making function, subject to regulations to be agreed on and *sanctions to be determined against the State which should refuse either to submit international questions to arbitration or to accept its decisions*'.

declares that the State that has committed an act of aggression has a civil obligation to make reparation, to pay damages and the costs of the war. It is not unjust that this obligation should fall upon the citizens who have, many of them, been guilty of positive encouragement or negative tolerance of the unjust action ; and in any event reparation can often be demanded justly where there has been no moral fault, as in the case of accidents. Finally, there is the possibility that one class or section within the State derives great benefits from an unjust social order. Even here, Père Bonnichon is cautious in introducing the moral issue. Responsibility would call for the fulfilment of three conditions. The social structures have to be *clearly unjust* ; a change must be possible ; and it must also be evident that personal action could help to bring about such an alteration. Only in this last instance would he admit a responsibility, that of individuals composing the group and not properly of the group itself. Incidentally, he warned the congress against too facile a use of group or collective responsibility—an idea behind which many persons hide themselves anonymously to avoid having to face their own individual moral problems.

FROM THE THEOLOGICAL AND MORAL ASPECT

The whole question was first considered, as would be expected in a Catholic congress, from a theological and moral point of view. How could this widespread notion of a *péché collectif* be fitted into the ordinary framework of moral theology, with its precise conception of individual sins ? In its French or Spanish form, *péché collectif* or *pecado colectivo*, the idea is made more precise than in our expression ' collective guilt '. Guilt is a vaguer word. Sin is an offence against the natural law or the law of God and it supposes awareness of the nature of the act and deliberate action. The moralists' answer to the difficulty proposed was that where individuals consciously and deliberately acted unjustly they were commiting individual sins ; where their action was not properly conscious or not deliberate, there was no sin. Consequently, the so-called *péché collectif* was the sum of a large number of individual sins and not a collective sin at all. Besides, they argued that sin is a personal revolt against morality and God and, though a community for juridical purposes may be looked upon as a moral person, it is not personal in the individual meaning of that term and cannot incur a personal moral responsibility. Therefore, in their judgment, the word *péché* in the expression *péché collectif* was not employed in a similar or even an analogous sense to its use for individual sin. It could only be a metaphor.

Further, though this was not peculiar to the moralists, the congress was conscious that modern thought overemphasized the community at the expense of the human person. For this there were two reasons :

the first, a healthy tendency to consider social justice and the responsibilitity of the individual to the community, a reaction against the individualism and *laisser-faire* of the nineteenth century ; the second, the dangerous legacy of Hegel, for whom the State or community represented a higher stage of the development of the Universal Spirit and therefore involved the total subordination of the individual to the State or, generally, to larger groups. This Hegelian theory not only provided a metaphysical argument for a totalitarian State—and was used by Gentile for that purpose in Italy—but, through its altered version in the philosophy of Karl Marx, affected the growth of the Socialist State in many countries. This Hegelian influence has been heightened by positivist theories, especially in the domain of sociology, which have attempted to derive individual morality and religion from a group mentality of supposedly primitive peoples. It is therefore a healthy attitude on our part to be sceptical about ' collective mentalities ' and ' collective responsibilities '.

The moralists' answer is clear and was expected. There remains, however, a further question. Supposing we abandon the notion of a *péché collectif* in the sense of *péché,* may there not exist a situation or atmosphere of sin, an *estado pecaminosa,* the consequence of countless individual sins, both of commission and omission ? Individual sins leave their imprint behind them, not only upon the sinner but on the society in which he lives. Could we perhaps speak of a *péché objectivisé,* a sin that has been built into the social fabric of a society ? Or, on the plane of personal morality, a situation of moral disintegration and laxity in which moral evils have come to be accepted and tolerated to the grave detriment of the community. Of this we shall say more later.

The theologian has one or two tempting parallels he may consider. It might be argued that original sin is a perfect example of what modern thinkers are seeking under the heading of *péché collectif.* Here you have a personal sin on the part of Adam which has not only bequeathed to his descendants certain penal consequences but which has associated these descendants in the sin itself. On this point St Paul is explicit. We have all sinned in Adam ; original sin has made us sinners. The various explanations of original sin suggest some association of our wills in the sin of Adam or, more normally, think of Adam in a representative capacity. Original sin is not the personal sin of human beings other than Adam, yet it has left them in a condition of sin. The theologian would point out that original sin was in the first place an individual sin which has had wider consequences, whereas the modern notion of *péché collectif* does not suppose any individual sin but rather a sinful act or state of the community as such. In any case, our knowledge of original sin is strictly theological and there are dangers in drawing parallels between it and other human situations.

The Old Testament certainly brings us face to face with something very like a collective sin. This was analysed by Père Guillet, S.J., of the theological faculty of Fourvière, Lyons, in an admirable paper and *rapport*. Commenting upon the 32nd chapter of Exodus, he pointed out that Israel had sinned against God through its idolatry.

> And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying : Go, get thee down ; thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, hath sinned.
> They have quickly strayed from the way which thou didst shew them ; and they have made to themselves a molten calf, and have adored it, and sacrificing victims to it, have said : These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. (vv. 7–8).

The people had sinned, not as a collection of individuals but as a people elect whom God had set apart with its special destiny. It was the people's rejection of the one God, punishment for which would extend to its descendants, to the third and fourth generation. Père Guillet did not accept the interpretation sometimes put forward that one can trace in the Old Testament a development from the idea of a sin of the people of Israel to a later conception in which there is nothing but individual sin, for he insisted that this later appeal to the individual conscience is that the individual may detach himself from collective sinfulness through personal repentance. He contrasts the attitudes of Aaron and Moses in this passage. Aaron who had bowed to the people's will and made possible the casting of the golden calf tries to dissociate himself from their guilt, to detach himself from his natural solidarity with his people, throwing the blame upon them as a whole. This, urges Père Guillet, is a wrong attitude. Adam laid the blame for his sin upon Eve, as did Eve upon the serpent and Aaron on the people of Israel. On the other hand, Moses, though himself innocent, refused to dissociate himself from his people and prayed that God would either forgive their offence or let His wrath descend upon Moses.

> Returning to the Lord, he said : I beseech Thee : this people hath sinned a heinous sin, and they have made to themselves gods of gold. Either forgive them this trespass,
> Or if Thou do not, strike me out of the book that thou hast written. (vv. 31–32)

The supreme instance of this attitude, foreshadowed by Moses, is Christ. The suffering servant of Jahweh in Isaias is innocent but he carries the burden of the people's sins. And Christ shoulders the burden of human sin—all the sins, the *péché collectif* in a different sense—of humanity. Redemption comes from His solidarity with ourselves which derives from the Incarnation.

It would of course be unwise to press too closely this seeming parallel between the experience of Israel and that of peoples to-day. In the first

case, Revelation is our source of knowledge of the destiny of Israel and it remains a unique case in history. The heir to Israel in the new dispensation is the Church of God.

AN ATMOSPHERE OF SIN

Some attention was given to the present condition of the Western world. Did it reveal that atmosphere of sin, that *péché objectivisé* we have mentioned? Padre Enrico de Rovasenda, an Italian Dominican, and M. Folliet, Professor at the *Institut Catholique* of Lyons, contributed valuable analyses. The answer of both was more or less affirmative. Padre de Rovasenda stressed the influence on modern society of Freud's psychology and of Existentialism in its Sartrian form. Marcel has said that '*l'existentialisme est en soi d'essence chrétienne et il ne peut devenir athée que par accident et en méprisant sa propre nature*' but for Sartre '*L'existentialisme athée qui le représente est plus cohérent*'. He emphasized also the dangers of being engulfed in a technological society in which everything is measured in quantitative scales and where the human spirit can so easily be swamped and enslaved. Only a heightened sense of moral and personal responsibility will make a man secure in this modern environment, and unfortunately modern progress and secularism have dulled and deadened the human conscience. Marcel who has written much and admirably on this subject has offered the following judgment:

> *Tout progrès technique devrait être équilibré par une sorte de conquête intérieure orientée vers une maitrise toujours plus grande de soi . . . Dans le monde d'aujourd' hui, on peut dire qu'un être perd d' autant plus de sa conscience de la réalité intérieure et profonde qu' il est plus dépendent de tous les méchaniques dont le fonctionnement lui assure une vie matérielle tolérable.*[1]

M. Folliet underlined several modern tendencies. First, the loss of a sense of sin which culminates in the acceptance of sin as part of public and popular life. Art, literature, entertainment and advertisement suppose that the public is familiar with, and more and more acclimatized to, what is frankly evil. A secularized society is saturated with sex and adores its twentieth-century version of the golden calf. In the second place, the connection has increasingly been lost between the moral and civil law. The stricter moral standards of the past are replaced by a pragmatic and utilitarian attitude. Governments often provide a bad example by sacrificing everything to the immediate situation. The *morale de la situation* or utility has usurped the place of a morality of right and wrong. Most fundamental of all these elements is the estrangement of modern man from God which means that man has lost his proper assessment of himself, his own life's purpose and his personal dignity

[1] *Le mal est parmi nous*, Paris, Plon, 1948.

and tends to merge himself into some larger collective, class or State. Modern psychology offers an interpretation of human behaviour without ethics; and remorse, and therefore also repentance, is regarded as a morbid condition. Equally fatal is the tendency on man's part to lose himself in the historical process, to imagine that the one sin is to oppose the march of events, whether this be understood in terms of Marxist development or merely technological progress.

M. Folliet suggested that one reason for the present-day emphasis on a *péché collectif* is to be discovered in man's uneasy *malaise* rising from his circumstances. Sin is held to come not so much from individual wills as from an evil or unfair social organization or from defective social structures. The solution is therefore simple : create good social structures and there will be no more sin. It is evident that institutions can corrupt individuals and that groups can be, as Péguy claimed, in a state of mortal sin : but is equally clear that individuals can corrupt institutions and that the *péchés des groupes* supposes numberless personal sins.

On the other hand, it was remarked by several members of the congress that this was not the whole of the picture of modern society. Side by side with this undoubted loss of a sense of personal sin and an undoubted estrangement from God has gone a growing and more delicate feeling about the responsibility of men for others. The social sense is more fully developed to-day than it was fifty years ago—witness the transformation of society in Britain and generally in Western Europe. We may dislike and reject the ideology of Socialism but behind it was a force of conscience, the refusal of men and women to rest content with social injustices and gross inequalities. Without this force of conscience the welfare State in Britain would never have been achieved. It still has its critics and at times lays itself open to criticism, but I cannot imagine anyone seriously suggesting that Britain should revert to the social and economic circumstances of the Edwardian age. The growing accent on peace and co-operation between nations, on which I dwelt in the first pages of this article, is again a witness to a growing sense of social responsibility, evidenced also in various programmes of penal and prison reform. The Western world has become more humanitarian, and this in a sense means more human or at least more humane. The fact that it has lost some of its hold on the first commandment that men shall love their God is probably one of the most important reasons why it has taken a firmer grip upon the second commandment that men shall love their neighbour. At any rate, to present a balanced picture, these other tendencies must be given their due attention.

THE JUDGMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

The last point of view examined during the *Conversaçiones* was that of the sociologist. Sociology does not judge by principles ; it gathers

and assesses social facts. It too registers this growth of a sense of collective responsibility, this widespread feeling in a community or throughout the world that the problems of others affect all of us and are our problems, that there exists a human solidarity between groups, classes and entire peoples. To a certain extent it is a return to the Catholic understanding of the unity of the human race. It may show itself in the awareness that two-thirds of the human family has insufficient food and that therefore the more fortunate third must help them, or the uneasy feeling that somehow all peoples share a common shame or guilt because of the action of one State or group of States, for instance in the atomic attack upon Hiroshima in 1945 or for their failure to give effective assistance to the Hungarians in 1955.

Père Carrier, S.J., a French Canadian, quoted the figures of a Gallup Poll, held in 1958 by the *Institut Français d'Opinion Publique*.[1] The persons whose views were canvassed were men and women between 18 and 30.

Three questions were asked. The first : Are you affected by the sufferings of persons in distant countries ? 82 per cent. answered, Yes ; 10 per cent., No ; and 8 per cent. were non-committal. To the second question : Ought a man make efforts to improve society ? 88 per cent. replied affirmatively ; only 2 per cent. negatively, while 10 per cent. gave no definite answer. The third question ran thus : Can you *personally* make any contribution towards human and social justice ? 39 per cent. thought they could, 30 per cent. that they could not. This time as large a percentage as 31 would not commit themselves. Many of them had a feeling of individual impotence in view of the immense and complex problems concerned. What could the individual do ? When the answers were further analysed, it was seen that 45 per cent. of the men answered the third question in the affirmative but only 33 per cent. of the women, and that 34 per cent. of the women gave a negative reply. But the women sympathized more readily with distant peoples than the men ; the respective ratios were 87 and 78.

Dr Verdu, a Spanish professor of jurisprudence, dealing with the theme from a political angle, outlined four cases in which he thought that the term *péché collectif* might be used, in its more general meaning. The first was *collegial*, the position of an organized social or political body, resulting from decisions taken by responsible authorities, with at least the tacit approval of members and their co-operation leading to complicity. A second consisted in a *widely diffused atmosphere* of sin within a group as the sin becomes more widely tolerated and eventually accepted into the normal standards and values of the group. A third is *structural*, when a sinful attitude has been built into and is favoured by the social structures, the habits and prevailing views of a group or nation, and thus

[1] Published in *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, no. 86 (15 December), Pp. 11–20.

is able gravely to lessen the responsibility of individuals. Finally one might speak of a *relational* sin, the sin of an individual but with serious consequences in the social order and itself becoming the occasion of other personal sins.

Naturally, the concluding sessions considered the ways and means in which convinced Christians could exercise a sound influence within the society of to-day and could encourage this sense of social and international responsibility, while warning their compatriots of the dangers latent in it. The small British delegation at the *Conversaçiones* reminded the Spanish and French members of a factor that had no relevance in Spain and very little in France but which had all the time to be borne in mind when discussing Anglo-Saxon countries, namely the existence of Protestant churches and of a strong Protestant conscience on many of these matters. The question here was not merely what Catholics themselves might do but what might be done by Christians in mutual collaboration on the social and political plane. The successes of Christian parties in Holland and in particular of the Christian Democratic Union in the West German Republic showed how this was possible and could lead to remarkable results.

IN CONCLUSION

The idea of collective responsibility and the possibility of collective guilt have been considered from various viewpoints. It will be useful perhaps to sum up these considerations in a number of conclusions ; the conclusions, though they express fairly enough the mind of the *conversadores* of San Sebastian, are my own.

In the first place, it is clear that men and women have a more real appreciation of their duties towards society, whether in their own land or internationally. The reasons are manifold ; the shrinkage of the world. Paul Valéry has reminded us that ' *le temps du monde fini commence* '. Our world is a small one, and we have grown aware of its limits. Men are thrown into closer contact with one another ; their problems are common problems that mutually interact. The old divisions, once accepted as final and irrevocable, between States and peoples appear antiquated. Everywhere men are groping towards a new and more internationalized society. There is evidence too of a greater sensitiveness, at least in the Western world, towards other human beings. Social reforms, an equality of opportunity, a respect for a person's dignity as a human being—these all express this awakening appreciation. Some modern philosophers underline this same thought : Marcel, for example, when he insists that our first and most fundamental manner of life is a *co-esse*, a co-existence, with other persons, or Heidegger with his distinction between our *Umwelt* (the setting in which we are placed, including our

relations to things and instruments) and a very different *Mitwelt* (the system of personal relations between ourselves and other human beings who may never be properly regarded as things or instruments). This sense of collective responsibility has undoubtedly favoured international co-operation at all levels.

But, it should be observed in the second place that there is a reverse aspect. A habit has developed of speaking of guilty men, classes and nations, of throwing the blame for evil on to the shoulders of one class or people. The Western European Powers have been charged with all kinds of crimes in the expression 'colonialism' and the employer class made responsible for any and every social ill. The idea that some other class is guilty, or even one's own class, may provide an excuse for the individual as it provides scapegoats on which to pile abuse. The reverse aspect of this collective notion is that it may well, and indeed does, lessen personal responsibility as it also encourages men to sink themselves deeper within a collective, whether of class or nationality, to which they belong. The result is the unreal and impersonal life, deplored by Christians as well as Existentialists. I would add here a brief reference to a paper of Professor Sciacca who was unfortunately unable to attend the actual *conversaçiones*. He insisted that Christians carefully distinguish between a *collective* and a *communion*. A collective absorbs the individual to the grave detriment of his individuality; a communion safeguards his personality even as it brings him into contact with others, precisely at the level of personal understanding and personal worth.

Thirdly, this sense of solidarity with others means that we may be obliged to accept its consequences. A community acts through its official organs, its political representatives. If those representatives act unjustly, we may well have to suffer the juridical consequences. Where a collective responsibility is recognized, there is obviously room for a collective guilt. Such a status is juridically accepted.

But, in the fourth place, it remains extremely questionable whether we can talk about a collective sin, a *péché collectif*, in the moral order. Strictly speaking, a collective sin would be attributable to a community and not to any individual member of the community. It would be a collective, not a personal, sin. The moralist would add that sin demands an awareness and a deliberation which no collective could have so that we are left with the alternative that it is either not a sin or not collective. It would be a mistake to press too closely the analogy or comparison between individual sin and this *péché collectif*.

Finally, there are states and situations in which we may apply the expression, *péché collectif*: for example, when members of a community identify themselves with the unjust policies and actions of their rulers or accept an unjust social system. Morally, it is the rulers who are

guilty ; the members of the community sin, according to their awareness of the situation, by co-operation. Or, when powerful influences within a society introduce and propagate immoral practices which the society as a whole comes to tolerate and eventually to approve. Or, again, when injustice or cruelty are built into the fabric of society. In such cases we have a condition of things which is morally unhealthy, which encourages immoral judgments and behaviour and too easily persuades even well-intentioned persons that they can do little or nothing to alter the tone or complexion of society till they may end by themselves conforming to its evil standards. The remedy is to cleanse the atmosphere, to purify society. But this can in the last resort be achieved only through a clarification of the individual conscience. A well constructed society will not necessarily produce good men, though it may encourage them where they exist ; but good men will produce, if not always a well constructed, at any rate a sound and healthy society.

The Octave of Prayer for Unity:

ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH, AND SIGNIFICANCE

by GERMANUS TOMAINO

TO anyone who has followed, even casually, the more important trends in religious affairs since the last war, one striking fact seems to stand out : it is the concerted effort throughout Christendom in the interests of Christian unity. Both Catholics and Protestants seem to have been struck, perhaps as never before, by the deplorable effects of disunity and the consequent need of accord within the Christian ranks.

We have seen this concern for unity growing rapidly in the Protestant world, and among the Orthodox as well, ever since the formation of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1948. The new Council, with a membership representing the greater part of world Protestantism, avowed that one of its principal aims—if not the main one—would be to work for the attainment of Christian unity. Since 1948 the Council, through its periodic meetings in various countries and by dint of its various media, has done much to keep this objective before its member churches. Particularly through its department of Faith and Order, which is concerned with the theological work for Christian unity, has the World Council attempted to lay the necessary basis for eventual accord between divided Christian bodies.

From the Catholic side, too, an impressive amount of emphasis has been placed on the problem of Christian disunity. Time and again, the late Pope Pius XII in his letters and addresses brought into relief the divinely endowed unity of the Catholic Church, and at regular intervals—as he did in his proclamation for the Holy Year—called for the return of separated Christians to their Mother Church.

During the late Pope's pontificate, too, a great deal of unitive activity was going on among Catholic groups throughout the world, particularly so in continental Europe, to promote Christian unity. An ever-growing interest in the spirituality and the rites of Eastern Christendom became more and more evident. Discussions and correspondence between Catholic and Protestant theologians became more frequent. Movements like the *Una Sancta* in Germany, the *Istina* Center in Paris, and the *Unitas* Association in Rome came to the fore. Books, periodicals, and a

wealth of other literature pertaining to unity appeared on every side. In fact, in December 1949, the Holy Office, taking cognizance of this state of affairs, issued an instruction to local ordinaries regarding the 'Oecumenical Movement' in which it declared :

> This excellent work of 'reunion' of all Christians in the one true faith and Church should daily become more integrated as a distinguished portion in the universal pastoral charge and be made an object of concern that the whole Catholic people take to heart and recommend to God in fervent supplications.

And now with the accession to Peter's Chair of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII, the interest in Christian unity has reached a peak that it has perhaps never before attained. From his first public allocution, the new Pope has declared his preoccupation with the question of unity, and his announcement last January of a forthcoming oecumenical council produced an electrifying effect throughout the Christian world, most of all because it was to serve as an invitation to reunion.

Thus, it is plainly evident that a new spirit is at work among the divided Christians of our day. Some will attribute this new consciousness to the lack of security engendered by the past war, in consequence of which men would have to attain some kind of workable unity among themselves if such a fearful catastrophe were ever to be averted in the future. Others will consider it as a reaction of the Western world to the formidable menace of Communism. Still others see the problem of unity coming more into focus as a result of frustration on the world mission field at the bewilderment of non-Christians when faced with conflicting representations of the Christian message.

It may well be that these and other influences have helped to create the present day concern with the quest for unity. Yet over and above these, it is most probable that what is taking place can be credited in large measure to the effect of prayer. This very point is made in the same instruction of the Holy Office just referred to :

> At this time in many parts of the world owing partly to various external events and changes of mental attitude, but, under the inspiring grace of God, due chiefly to the common prayers of the faithful, a desire has awakened and is growing daily in the hearts of many, who are separated from the Catholic Church, that a reunion be accomplished among all who believe in Christ the Lord. Assuredly to the children of the true Church this is a source of holy joy in the Lord as well as an inducement to lend their assistance to all who are sincerely seeking the truth, by entreating light and strength for them from God in fervent prayer.

In our own times it was Pope Leo XIII who emphasized both the necessity and the value of prayer in breaking down the walls of prejudice and bitterness between Christian groups. Accordingly, Pope Leo, who

was himself such a champion of the cause of unity, saw fit to order that the novena in preparation for the feast of Pentecost be observed primarily with the intention of promoting reunion. In his encyclical letter *Divinum Illud Munus* of May 1897, we find him writing :

> Two years ago in our letter, *Provida Matris*, we recommended special prayers during the solemnity of Pentecost, in order to hasten the blessing of Christian unity. Now we would like to do more. We therefore decree and ordain that in the whole Catholic world this year, and every year henceforth in perpetuity, there be observed a novena of prayer preceding Whitsunday in all the parish churches . . . and also in other churches and chapels.

No doubt, this appeal to the universal Church could not have been fruitless. Its effects, spiritual in themselves, must have made their mark to a greater or less degree. This is quite likely so today, also, as interest in this yearly novena is being rekindled.

Apart from this initiative of Pope Leo, it is true to say that the most widely observed period of prayer for the realization of Christian unity is the Church Unity Octave[1] which from all indications is held the world over. This eight-day interval of prayer was inaugurated in the United States in the year 1908, and surprisingly enough had its origin in the Episcopal Church, its founder being the Reverend Lewis T. Wattson (later known in the religious life as Father Paul James Francis, S.A.).

This admirable and saintly man had begun and completed his studies for the ministry in the Episcopal Church, but as time went on he became convinced of the erroneous position of that Church, resulting from the breach with Rome in the sixteenth century. His tendencies, as a result, grew more and more marked towards the Church of Rome, for he came to understand that only she could claim to be from the beginning the one true Church of Christ

It was with these thoughts in mind that in 1898, in collaboration with Lurana Mary White, an Anglican nun, Father Paul Wattson founded the Society of the Atonement, a religious community along Franciscan lines. He established it within the Episcopal Church, but it was begun with the aim of ' bearing witness to the primacy of the Catholic Church and the winning of Anglicans and non-papal Christians to the obedience of Peter '.

At its inception, the new community at Graymoor, Garrison, New York, met with a good deal of sympathy and admiration in American Episcopal circles, but as Fr Paul's convictions became increasingly

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[1] Although still known by this original title, the preferred designation of this period of prayer is the ' Chair of Unity Octave ' a name definitively adopted in 1949 by the Society of the Atonement, the community founded by Father Paul Wattson, originator of the Octave.

explicit, his activities began to meet with determined opposition on the part of his coreligionists. Referring to this early period in the life of his community, he was to write later :

> Until the Society of the Atonement began to witness openly to the *de jure divino* jurisdiction of the Holy See, and to teach that every baptized Christian in the whole world owed allegiance and obedience to the Pope of Rome as the Sovereign Pontiff and true Vicar of Christ, things went prosperously at Graymoor. Franciscanism was popular in the Episcopal Church, and because of the admiration for St Francis, many looked favourably upon the serious attempt that was being made to establish a Franciscan institute amid the Highlands-of-the-Hudson.

One of the most forceful measures taken against the energetic clergyman was the refusal of practically all his fellow-churchmen to invite him to preach in their churches. Previously, Father Paul had had numerous such invitations, for he was an exceptionally gifted speaker.

Finding the pulpits of the Episcopal Church closed to him, the founder of the Society of the Atonement sought new means to convey his belief in the papal claims to others. In due course there matured in his mind the idea of publishing a monthly magazine ' devoted to the eternal principles of Church unity '. Thus it was that the first issue of *The Lamp* made its appearance on the feast of Candlemas in 1903, and in his very first editorial Father Paul wrote :

> Candlemas, the beautiful Feast of the Purification, when she who was ' the Lamp of Burnished Gold ' came into the Temple bearing the Light-of-the-World, marks the first appearance of *The Lamp*. We have lighted it as a witness to the Old Faith as taught by the English Church before a wicked king severed her from the Centre of Unity. We believe that not only does our Blessed Lord wish us to pray, but also to work for Unity : and instead of magnifying differences between ourselves and Rome, we ought to minimize them, and thus prepare the way for that peace which we all long for as Christians. . . . We place *The Lamp* under the special protection of our Immaculate Lady, Mary, Queen of Heaven, and her Seraphic Knight, St Francis of Assisi, the saint par excellence of Church Unity.

Among the early contributors to *The Lamp* was the Reverend Spencer Jones, Anglican rector of Moreton-in-the-Marsh in England, a man who to a great extent shared Father Paul's views on the papacy. In fact, this mutual accord led to their joint authorship in 1907 of a book entitled *The Prince of the Apostles* in which they subscribed to the belief that the Chair of Peter was the divinely constituted centre of Christian unity, and urged Anglicans and other separated bodies to return to it.

With a view to giving their objectives a more concrete realization, Spencer Jones wrote to Father Paul towards the end of 1907, suggesting

that the feast of St Peter on 29 June be made the occasion for sermons advocating reunion with the Holy See.

Although in complete sympathy with this idea, Father Paul saw the difficulty entailed in carrying it through in the Episcopal Church of his day. Instead, he felt that a much more effective means would be to launch a prayer movement in favour of Christian unity. In his reply to Spencer Jones, he therefore recommended that this be done in January, beginning with the feast of the Chair of St Peter in Rome on 18 January and continuing to the feast of the Conversion of St Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, on 25 January.

Thus, the idea of an octave of prayer for unity came into being, and its first observance followed soon after at Graymoor in 1908. In preparation for it, Father Wattson extended an invitation through the pages of *The Lamp* not only to his Anglican subscribers but also to Catholic bishops, priests, and laymen, a good number of whom were to be counted among his readers.

His appeal was well received, for he tells us in the February 1908 issue of his magazine that without any public announcement several thousand people had taken part in the prayers of the Octave. He was particularly gratified at the response made to his appeal by the clergy and religious of the Church of Rome. Commenting on this initial keeping of the Octave at Graymoor, Father Paul wrote :

> There is a peculiar fitness in this particular Octave for united prayer and effort to further true Catholic Unity, because it links the names of the two great Apostles who jointly founded the Holy Roman Church with that Chair of Peter, which is by divine appointment the centre around which all must rally and whose authority all must acknowledge before the whole body of the faithful can constitute one fold under one shepherd. Under the divine blessing let us hope that this Church Unity observance, so auspiciously begun, may be kept with increasing enthusiasm by increasing numbers year after year until our Lord's Prayer, *Ut omnes unum sint,* is completely fulfilled.

It was not in vain that this enterprise was launched, for less than two years later the Society of the Atonement was corporately received into the Catholic Church on 30 October 1909, with the approbation of St Pius X[1]. This was the first outcome of the Octave, and other effects

[1] Before making his decision to enter the Catholic Church, Father Wattson consulted with his diocesan, Dr Frederick Joseph Kinsman, Bishop of Delaware. With perfect discernment the bishop replied : ' My advice is that, in the interest of single-minded honesty and devotion to duty, you make a choice between the two Churches. You cannot serve either the Papal Church or the Protestant Episcopal Church well if you try to serve both at the same time. Either give up belief in a divinely established Papacy and in Roman dogmas as the one complete expression of the Christian faith, as one must do who is a consistent and contented Anglican, or else give up Anglican Orders, make an unqualified submission to the Latin Church, and be a good Roman Catholic. I have no hesitation in saying that if I were in your position I should choose the latter alternative '. Dr Kinsman himself was to follow Father Wattson's example by entering the Catholic Church in 1919. An interesting account of his step is to be found in his *Salve Mater.*

were not long in coming,[1] for in 1913 two Benedictine communities in the Anglican Church—one at Caldey and the other at Milford Haven, South Wales—were also received into the Catholic Church. Some years later, in 1937, two more Anglican communities followed suit—one at Surrey, England, and the other at Vancouver, British Columbia. Similar results in the thirties were likewise reported among separated Christian groups in Malabar, and we like to believe from testimonies given by these converts that the Octave had a great deal to do with it.

Moreover, less than ten years after the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, the Commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church on the World Conference of Faith and Order directed an appeal to all Protestant and Eastern Orthodox bodies to observe the January Octave of Prayer. In the circular letter it directed to the sixty other commissions set up in various sectors of the Protestant and Orthodox communions, the Episcopalian group declared in part :

> The World Conference on Faith and Order is an attempt to bring Christians together in true Christian love and humility to try to understand and appreciate one another, and so to prepare the way for constructive effort for that visible unity which is necessary to convince and convert the world to its Redeemer. Already many partial and local efforts are being made towards Reunion. It can not be doubted that God the Holy Spirit is inspiring and guiding them. . . . But if progress is to be made toward the visible Reunion of Christians, it can come only from the deep desire of the whole Church ; and that desire can only find its effective manifestation, its only means of achievement, through incessant and fervent prayer.

From its beginning, the Unity Octave of Prayer enjoyed the blessing and support of Popes, cardinals, and bishops. While still under Anglican auspices, it had won the approval of William Cardinal O'Connell of Boston, and in December 1909, St Pius X gave the Octave his recognition and his sanction. Many other members of the Sacred College and of the Catholic hierarchy followed their example shortly after. Perhaps the greatest impetus given to this period of prayer occurred in 1916 when Pope Benedict XV, in a papal brief, extended the practice of the Octave to the universal Church. A few years later, in 1921, the American bishops at their annual meeting adopted the resolution introduced by Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia that the Octave be observed every year in all the dioceses of the United States ; and we might go on in a similar vein for other parts of the world as well.

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[1] Whether by pure coincidence or not, it is of interest to note that the World Missionary Conference took place at Edinburgh in 1910. This meeting is generally regarded as marking the beginning of the oecumenical movement. It was at this conference that the Episcopalian Bishop Charles Brent proposed the formation of a large-scale international organization which would work for the attainment of Christian unity.

A fairly large group of Anglicans, too, still observe the Octave in the spirit of Father Paul Wattson. There is, in fact, in England a Church Unity Octave committee directed by Anglo-Catholics who openly advocate reunion with the Holy See as the only hope of unity. This committee claims that about 1,500 clergymen of the Church of England keep the Octave every year, as well as some forty of its religious communities.

In late years, as well, an adaptation of the Octave has been followed by the Faith and Order Department of the World Council of Churches. Called the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and begun in 1942, it is kept by the member churches of the Council during the same period of 18–25 January.[1]

Originally, Father Wattson did not specify that a particular intention should be prayed for on each day of the Octave ; the primary objective was simply to pray that separated Christians in general should return to communion with the Apostolic See. However, three years after the inauguration of the Octave he felt it best to suggest a theme for each successive day. Thus, in *The Lamp* for January 1911, Father Paul presented a list of definite intentions which he recommended to his readers. These were differently expressed after a time, so that in 1918 the intentions were finally cast into the following form in which we find them today :

January 18 : *Feast of St Peter's Chair at Rome :* The return of all the ' other sheep ' to the one fold of Peter, the One Shepherd.

January 19 : The return of all Oriental Separatists to communion with the Holy See.

January 20 : The submission of Anglicans to the authority of the Vicar of Christ.

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[1] This adaption was largely suggested by the initiative of the late Abbé Paul Couturier of Lyons who in 1934 began his Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. With the idea of having the same period of prayer for unity observed identically by Catholics and Protestants, Abbé Couturier forsook the daily intentions of Father Paul Wattson and substituted the formula of praying for the ' sanctification ' of the various Christian groups. However, as one may justly observe, this is not the same as praying for visible unity. It also leaves out of the picture the Catholic conception that Christian unity can only come about by a return to communion with Rome.

Another intention proposed by Abbé Couturier and his followers is that all should pray ' that there be realized that unity of Christians which Christ wills and by the means that He wills '. This could be laudable on the part of non-Catholics, but not so for Catholics who already possess that unity. As Bishop François Charrière of Fribourg pointed out in a pastoral letter to his clergy in July 1957, ' . . . the expression " Qu'arrive l'unité selon les moyens que le Christ voudra " does not at all manifest the requirements of Catholic doctrine. Moreover, the same formula is utilized by Protestants in a sense which excludes those demands. Here we find ourselves, therefore, in the presence of a typically ambiguous expression, since it is not interpreted in the same manner by those who employ it. One must, in consequence, have recourse to it prudently and not make our fellow Catholics believe that we are totally unaware of the conditions for the re-establishment of unity '.

January 21 : That the Lutherans and all the other Protestants of Continental Europe may find their way back to Holy Church.

January 22 : That Christians in America may become one in communion with the Chair of Peter.

January 23 : The return to the Sacraments of all lapsed Catholics.

January 24 : The conversion of the Jews.

January 25 : *Feast of the Conversion of St Paul :* The missionary conquest of the world for Christ.

Since Father Paul's death in 1940, the Society of Atonement has accomplished a great deal to carry on his chosen work of furthering the cause of Christian unity. At Graymoor, New York, the Friars of the Atonement have set up their Chair of Unity Apostolate which serves both as an information centre on matters relating to reunion and as a source of printed material for a more effective observance of the Unity Octave. At the centre of Christendom in Rome, as well, and in other localities the work of the Society goes quietly and steadily on and often meets with a gratifying response.

January 1958 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Octave of Prayer, and the late Pope Pius XII added a further commendation to the practice in a commemorative letter to His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman in whose archdiocese the Friars of the Atonement have their mother house. In that letter the Pope urged the necessity of earnest prayer and expressed the desire that ' this Octave be spread everywhere in the world as far as possible '.

Again in January 1959, Pope John XXIII added greater significance to the Octave by referring to it as a ' precious and providential practice ' and by choosing the last day of its observance in Rome this year to make his proclamation of the forthcoming oecumenical council.

Thus, step by step, the movement initiated by Father Paul Wattson in his Anglican days has grown to an impressive stature and has come to be seen increasingly as a great and efficacious means for the reunion of Christendom. It is earnestly to be hoped that in our day, when the hearts and minds of divided Christians are more than ever disposed to the idea of fraternal union, greater numbers of them may recognize its power for good, and by observing the Octave hasten the day when ' there shall be one fold and one Shepherd '.

Adventures In Space

by CORNELIUS LANCZOS

WE live in an epoch in which an exaggerated and perhaps even destructive emphasis is put on all matters relating to science. The masses became science-conscious, not because by a sudden revelation the true aims and values of science percolated down to the layman but because political pressure-groups saw fit to include scientific slogans in their programme. An atmosphere of this kind is not conducive to a genuine advancement of scientific knowledge. What the general public understands of the scientific explorations of our days is hardly more than what the science fiction writers—themselves dilettanti and dabblers in matters of science—see fit to convey to them. The result is that an unhealthy appetite is awakened for romantic schemes which have in fact little to do with true science. Perhaps it is not out of place to quote in this connection the well-chosen words of the great classical scholar Gilbert Murray, referring to the arts but equally applicable to the sciences : ' The unwillingness to make imaginative effort is the prime cause in almost all decay in art. It is the caterer, the man whose business it is to provide enjoyment with the very minimum of effort, who is in matters of art the real assassin.'

The title of this essay may convey the notion that something will be said about the various rockets and satellites which have been launched during the last year. I have in mind ' adventures ' of an entirely different character, adventures of the *mind* rather than adventures of the *body*. I would like to invite you to an imaginary journey, not as passengers of an improved sputnik which lands us on the Moon or on the planet Mars or Venus, but to a journey which guides us through the astonishing adventures of the human mind in the exploration of the problems of space, adventures *in* space, rather than adventures *into* space.

You might think that the word ' adventure ' is ill-chosen if it comes to such a tedious thing as ' space '. Is not geometry one of the least inspiring subjects of our ordinary school education ? Don't we remember the harrassing hours spent on some silly geometry problem which seemed to be void of any real significance ?

The fact is—believe it or not—that in all the school curriculum there is hardly anything so exciting, so mysterious, so astonishing, as the

various ramifications of geometry. If our study of geometry is drudgery, a ' must ', a part of the obligatory study-plan of secondary education, then we have missed the point already. We should study geometry as a rare privilege, as a fantastic experiment of the human mind to throw off the shackles of its limited personal existence and elevate itself to a rarified plane of abstractions where new horizons open towards the eternal and the absolute.

It was not an accident that in the Greek scheme of education the science of geometry took the most prominent place. ' You want to understand the inner workings of the universe, the hidden springs which hold things together ? then study geometry. You want to get a glimpse of the divine spirit which is active in all creation ? the laws of geometry will give you the answer.' Such was the admonition that Plato gave to his pupils.

In the mystical literature of the medieval Cabbalists one of the many names which referred to the divine being was ' ha-mokaum ', the ' place '. This name was chosen in reference to the omni-presence of God. But at the same time the expression evokes overtones which in modified form brings once more into evidence the geometrical reverence of the Platonists.

It happened during the early Renaissance, around the end of the fifteenth century, that the scientific principles of perspective, which had been in oblivion for many centuries, were rediscovered by such artists as the great Italian master Piero della Francesca. This was a great revelation for the painters of that epoch. They took an almost childish delight in deceiving the spectator by the feeling of depth in their pictures. To give a three-dimensional impression through a canvas which is only two-dimensional became one of the important aims of painting for centuries to come. Thus it happened that the laws of geometry penetrated into the realm of art. Much later, around the end of the nineteenth century, a new realization came to the artists. They discovered that mere copying from nature may betray a high degree of craftsmanship but cannot be considered as the final goal of art. Art has to penetrate behind the surface and has to express something which goes beyond the direct impression of the senses. And so was born abstract art which abandoned the laws of naturalistic painting in favour of a shadowy world of symbolistic designs. But once more the field of geometry retained its sway. When the painters and sculptors looked around for the basic patterns on which to erect an edifice of inner visions, they discovered among other things the fundamental geometrical elements upon which physical reality is constructed. They returned to the triangle, the cube, the cylinder, and once more the eternal was discovered in exactly those elements which form the basic study-ground of the science of geometry. The same development took

place in architecture. The grandiose space dimensions of the Gothic period of architecture were later felt as depressing and too overwhelming for the average man, with the result that the most magnificent Cathedrals of the Continent were ruined by an abundance of flowery altars and over-crowded by human figures. Now the architects realize once more that space has to speak for itself, that the divine element is not adequately symbolized by the representation of the human figure alone but by the magnificence of space itself. And so the circle came to a close : once more we are back at the ' ha-mokaum ', ' the place ', the name of the supreme being in the poetry of the old medieval Cabbalists.

* * *

But is it really true that one should find anything particularly exciting in such a completely sober and uninspiring thing as a triangle ? Well, it is amazing how much this harmless triangle influenced the development of human civilization. Eradicate the triangle and everything connected with it from the history of human civilization and we are back in the Stone-Ages.

I can give you perhaps a faint idea of the type of problems which we encounter in the study of the triangle.

First of all, if we speak of a triangle ABC, it is quite clear that we mean something which is localized outside of ourselves but at the same time we do not mean the chalk particles which have been used in the drawing of that triangle. The drawing may be more or less perfect, but this is immaterial. The drawing is only a *reminder*, the *idea* of a triangle is in our mind, with or without that drawing. Here we encounter the first decisive fact. Our concepts of space are *mental* and not physical images. They are obtained (by *abstraction*) from the concrete evidence of the senses but they have a life of their own. We just have to look into ourselves, concentrating on certain terms, and there we see quite clearly with our mental eyes—even if our physical eyes are shut—whatever we want to see : a straight line, a plane, a circle, a cube, a sphere, in fact we can conjure up these objects instantly, without any physical help. Whether it is light or dark, whether we feel good or bad, whether we are young or old, these mental images seem to have a remarkable persistency. Nor are they bound to the individual. We all agree if it comes to the study of geometry, we all find the same things plausible or implausible, and so we have good reason to assume that not only are these mental images remarkably persistent so far as the individual is concerned, but they seem to be even remarkably universal so far as the entire human race is concerned. And so we can

say that while these geometrical concepts are certainly not born with us, yet they develop on the basis of our experiences gradually, starting with the direct sense impressions and settling down finally in very definite mental images in which the space that surrounds us communicates its existence to us. The second thing we observe is that we can draw very definite conclusions as to the behaviour of space, on the basis of plain reasoning. This point is of particular importance since it had a decisive influence on the development of science.

The great eighteenth century philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) was the first to call attention to this problem and in fact he made this problem and the answer he gave to it the central core of his philosophy. Now Kant was no small figure in the development of human thought. If you wanted to possess all the articles and books written about Kant's philosophy, you would have a library not of hundreds but of thousands of articles and essays and books. And yet this great mind fell into the same trap that caught so many thinkers of the past who gave a wrong evaluation of the true nature of mathematics and geometry. The trap consists in trusting common sense more than we are permitted to trust it.

Kant gave a very definite answer to the question that he posed. Yes, he said, it is certainly amazing that the mind can discover the laws of space without any measurements, totally on the basis of pure reasoning. It is also true that it *looks* as if space were something completely outside the realm of the mind, something which exists in the objective world, quite independently of the mind. But if that were so, he argued, the puzzle would be insoluble. No, said Kant, the reason why the laws of space and time are discoverable by our reasoning, without the need of experimental verification, is that in fact space and time do *not* belong to the physical world at all but are the *forms* in which our mind perceives the messages of the outer world. We project space and time into the outer world, but in fact they belong to us because space and time are the forms into which we mould the sense perceptions received from the outer world. The external world sends us messages which we receive through our senses. Now we bring order into this bewildering maze of perceptions by arranging them in terms of space and time. According to Kant, space and time have no objective existence, they are categories of our own making, invented for the purpose of bringing order into the otherwise unmanageable labyrinth of sense experiences. Now if this is so, then it is not strange that we can dictate the laws of geometry in an absolute way. After all, *we* have brought space and time into existence, it is our creation and so, naturally, its laws reflect our own way of thinking.

This ingenious theory of Kant fell victim to the later evolution of science. The trouble was that Kant trusted the apparently common-

sense basis of mathematics and geometry too much. We often hear the statement that all you need in mathematics is common sense. Nothing is more misleading than this statement. Mathematics is the most *un*common sense you can imagine. The mathematicians are in fact inspired madmen who have weird visions of fantastic shapes, completely inaccessible to the sober mind which moves on the lower planes of common sense. If the human mind would have followed the dictates of common sense, without exploiting its imaginative faculties, we would have never left the happy hunting grounds of the cave-dweller, and the arduous path to the mountains would have remained unexplored.

But how can we explain that such an excellent mind as Immanuel Kant was so completely deceived concerning the nature of geometry? To understand that we have to go back many centuries, arriving at the Greeks who were masters of geometrical reasoning. The Greeks recognized that we have sharp and universal mental images relative to the elements of space, such as point, angle, straight line, circle, plane, and so on, and they also recognized that we can deduce the laws of geometry on the basis of reasoning. They brought the art of reasoning to a very high degree of perfection by discovering a method by which we could proceed quite systematically in the discovery of geometrical relations, instead of proceeding in a haphazard fashion. They recognized that it suffices to start with a few very general statements whose truth has to be admitted. After establishing these general statements, the rest follows by the process of logical deduction.

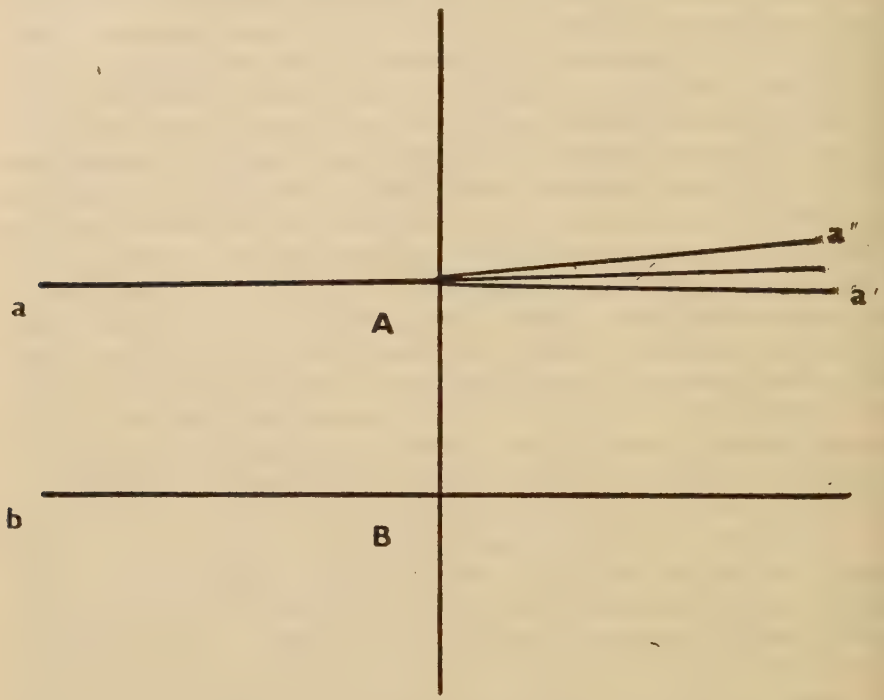
Now the process of logical deduction is not a source of dissension. We all think in the same logical patterns and therefore, if we disagree, the disagreement does not come about because we start with the same premises but went astray by following our own laws of logic. The laws of logic are universal and, granting the premises, we must also grant the conclusions. Our disagreements are almost always caused by the fact that, either tacitly or admittedly, we start from different premises. (The reason given by the semanticists, namely that we connect different ideas with the same words, is far less important). Realizing this it is very important, said the Greeks, that we should lay our cards on the table, that means, we should start with the enumeration of all the general statements from which we are going to draw our conclusions. If the general statements are admitted, the rest follows with logical necessity and we are constantly on firm ground.

The general statements were put in two categories : the axioms and the postulates. The axioms—or ' common notions ', as Euclid called them—expressed some general statements which are demanded by the nature of our thinking. These we would accept without hesitation since it cannot be our intention to exclude in advance the possibility of thinking.

Such an axiom is, for example, that starting with equal quantities and performing equal operations with them, we must come to equal results. This is self-evident in the sense that we could not reason at all if this assumption would not hold. Therefore it is an axiom which we accept without further discussion. But all these axioms put together are still insufficient in themselves to deduce even the simplest geometrical result. We need additional statements, called ' postulates ', in order to succeed. These postulates are no longer of a purely logical nature. We assume them because they seem plausible but we cannot claim that it would be unthinkable that they should be false. For example, one of these postulates is that between two points only *one* straight line can be drawn. If we concentrate on the mental image of a straight line, we cannot imagine ourselves starting from a point A and going toward the point B in two different straight lines. We can imagine only *one* straight line from A to B, any other line must necessarily be curved. And thus Euclid announces this postulate by saying : ' Let it be granted that two straight lines cannot include a space '. The words ' let it be granted ' are of great importance. He did not say ' it is self-evident that ' etc. The fact that we have a certain very definite mental image of a straight line which does not allow that two intersecting straight lines should intersect a second time, is not the same as to claim that it is *logically* impossible to assume the existence of a second point of intersection. Our geometrical concepts have certain definite properties but this is not the same as saying that our reasoning would go to pieces if more than one straight line could exist between two points. The Greek scientists were quite aware of this difference which was unfortunately forgotten in later centuries. The early copyists of Euclid confused axioms and postulates by placing them in the wrong order. Some postulates were listed as axioms and vice versa. In dictionaries published as late as 1900 frequently we find that axioms and postulates are defined in practically identical terms. The phrase ' self-evident truth ' is applied to both of them. This expression conveys a fair enough idea of an ' axiom ', defined by Aristotle as ' a statement which the student cannot deny without giving up thinking itself ', but the same cannot be said of the ' postulates '. The ' postulates ' are accepted by the pupil on the master's authority but the postulates do not have the same finality about them as the axioms. If someone puts forward reasons why a certain postulate should not be accepted, his arguments cannot be refuted on purely *logical* grounds.

Euclid established his postulates on the basis of plausibility. But are we sure that this plausibility is unassailable ? There was one particular postulate of Euclid which aroused a great deal of controversy almost from the beginning. This is the famous ' fifth postulate ' or ' parallel postulate ', the last of the Euclidean postulates. Although its truth seemed evident, its formulation was much more complicated and less direct than that of

the other postulates. Let us draw a straight line and two perpendiculars to it, obtaining a figure like this :



Now we have no difficulty in demonstrating that the lines *a* and *b* must remain ' parallel ', i.e. that they can never intersect. Indeed, the complete symmetry of the figure shows that whatever happens on the right side, must also happen on the left side. Now, if the lines *a* and *b* were to intersect on the right side, they would have to intersect also on the left side, and then we would have two straight lines which included a definite space between them. This is prohibited by the aforementioned postulate. But now the question is whether the line *a* is the *only* line to be drawn from the point A which is parallel to *b*. Could it happen that we might draw a *second* line from A which would remain parallel to *b* ? Euclid postulated that this is *not* possible. Indeed, no matter how little the inclination of this new line *a'* is toward *b*, eventually they would intersect; and if we go to the other side of the line *a* (see the line *a''* of the figure), the intersection would occur on the other side. This is what Euclid's ' parallel postulate ' claims (the name ' parallel postulate ' has been chosen because the postulate is equivalent to the existence of a *unique parallel* to be drawn to a straight line from an outside point.) We could hardly imagine that anything else could happen since even the slightest deviation from *a* would

gradually become larger and larger and eventually lead to an intersection with *b*. But the fact that our mental images of space perception do not allow any other solution, does not mean that any other solution is *logically* unthinkable. Euclid did not say that his assumption is logically provable. In fact, he would have hardly listed this assumption among the ' postulates ', had he considered a logical proof possible. But the geometers after Euclid thought that such an obvious and evident proposition should be provable. What, if in fact this postulate of Euclid is not an independent postulate, but a mere consequence of the other postulates? Indeed, innumerable such ' proofs ' have been invented, but all of them contain a hidden logical error by tacitly assuming what one wants to prove. The most remarkable work in this direction is that of the Italian Jesuit, Father Girolamo Saccheri (1667–1733). Saccheri was an excellent geometer who did not fall easily into any of the logical traps of his predecessors. His idea was, not to try to prove the parallel postulate directly but to give an *indirect* proof. Let us assume the *falseness* of Euclid's fifth postulate. Then, if we come to a logical contradiction, the truth of Euclid's postulate will be established. And thus Saccheri set himself the task of *dropping* the parallel postulate and developing a geometry without the use of that postulate. Since he was a first-class geometer, all his deductions are absolutely correct and thus he is the real founder of the so-called ' non-Euclidean geometry '. The only trouble was that he was too eager to establish the truth of Euclid's geometry. Hence he was constantly on the look-out for a contradiction. He filled a whole book with the propositions and theorems of this new, allegedly absurd, geometry and still the contradiction was not in sight. Finally he came to a point where he was jubilant : ' Here is the contradiction for which I was looking from the very beginning '. This last proposition in Saccheri's famous opus, entitled *Euclides ab omni naevo vindicatus,* (i.e. ' Euclid vindicated of all blemish '), is the only one in whose interpretation he was mistaken. The proposition involved the concept of *infinity* and the approach to infinity requires a caution which was beyond the possibilities of the mathematical sciences in Saccheri's time. If Saccheri tried to vindicate Euclid of all blemish, we can certainly vindicate Saccheri of all blemish and hail him as the first systematic developer of non-Euclidean geometry, although the first investigators of this geometry who were fully aware of its logical admissibility, were Bolyai (in 1832) and Lobachevski (in 1835). It was only in the late nineteenth century that the non-provability of Euclid's fifth postulate was finally definitely established by showing that the geometry based on the refutation of this postulate cannot lead to any logical contradictions.

Let us once more recall to our mind the excellent structure of Greek geometry. The great discovery of Greek science was that geometry can be pursued as a purely *logical* enterprise. If we admit the validity of the

basic postulates, the rest follows by strict logical deductions. Hence in the development of geometry three phases can be distinguished :

(*a*) Sense impressions ;

(*b*) Mental images ;

(*c*) Logical system.

On the first level we have the direct sense-impressions which establish a relation between us and the external world. On the second level we arrive at some mental images which are abstractions of the sense impressions and which permit us to investigate the properties of space, irrespective of the physical objects which are present in space. On the third level we are no longer interested in the original sense impressions, or even in the mental images derived from them. We pursue a *logical game* in trying to find out what follows from certain given postulates.

Now on this third level, in the erection of a logical system, the entire responsibility rests with the *postulates*. These postulates are introduced on the basis of plausibility and not on the basis of logical necessity. It is true that Euclid considered one definite set of postulates preferable and did not go into the discussion of the question of what would happen if we started from some *other* set of postulates. He was satisfied that our mental images provide us with certain general, although logically unprovable, propositions, which we have the right to accept as the basic postulates of geometry. But the distinction between logically necessary (axioms) and logically unnecessary (postulates) was clearly made. The fatal mistake that even such an ingenious philosopher as Kant committed was that even he put axioms and postulates on the same level, thus assuming that Euclid's system of geometry is the *only* possible system.

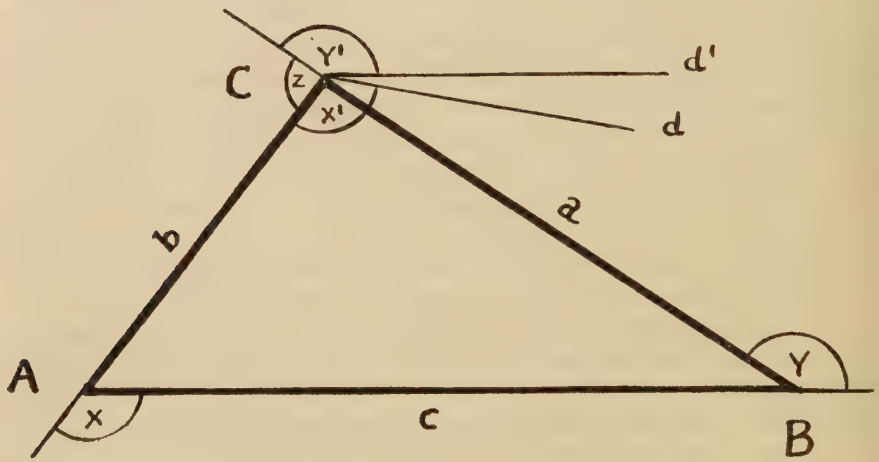
But then, even if other logical systems of geometry are possible, why should we deviate from Euclid's system ? Is it really necessary to make such a sharp distinction between the second stage of ' mental images ' and the third stage of erecting a ' logical system ' ? Yes indeed, this distinction is necessary on account of the peculiar dichotomy which exists between space as a mental concept and space as a physical reality. *Conceptually* the Euclidean system of geometry is perfectly satisfactory and flawless. If our aim is merely to erect a logical system on the basis of a given set of postulates, there is no reason why we should put a question mark after any of the Euclidean postulates. They are derived from our mental images by intuition and they are free of any logical contradictions—at least we hope so since the exact proof of this fact has never been given. The question is, however, whether or not the *physical space* as we find it in the universe, is in harmony with these postulates. A ' straight line ', after all, is not only a mental luxury. We assume that a physical object can *actually* pursue a straight line course, not in our thoughts only, but in reality. The picture we have drawn above with the two parallel lines *a* and *b* was first of all

meant as a mental exercise. But it is more than a mental exercise. A point may actually move along the line *b*. Another point may actually move along the line *a'* which is ever so slightly inclined to the line *a*. Will these two points *actually* come together after let us say ten thousand miles? How do we know what may happen at such terrific distances? The fact is that our mental images are found on the basis of actual physical experiences but these experiences are restricted to relatively *small* (and yet not too small) portions of space. Are we sure that in large distances the same things must occur as in small distances? Our geometrical intuition makes use of the ' law of similarity ' which assumes that a large figure is a perfect copy of a small figure, except for the matter of scale. But the ' law of similarity ' is not a logical axiom. It is a *postulate*, incorporated into Euclid's system, but not something that can be proved on purely logical grounds.

Here we see the great importance which is attached to the matter of the ' postulates '. If the postulates were of a purely *logical* origin and our experiences with physical space contradicted some of the geometrical laws deduced from the postulates—such as the theorem of Pythagoras for example—we would be in the awkward situation of having to admit that the physical universe is beyond our comprehension. But in fact we are faced with a different situation. The postulates of geometry do not lead to a unique system. The parallel postulate of Euclid establishes a very definite system of geometry which is nearest to our geometrical intuition. The rejection of the parallel postulate establishes a *different* system of geometry, the ' non-Euclidean geometry ', which is logically equally possible. The ' physical space ' has to make its choice, as it were. It cannot be Euclidean *and* non-Euclidean at the same time. But it may be Euclidean *or* non-Euclidean. And even that may not suffice. To give up the parallel postulate means that we give up *one* of Euclid's postulates. But can we be sure that all the *other* postulates of Euclid (equally derived from geometrical intuition and not from logical necessity) are necessarily true—true in the sense that the physical space follows their dictates? Euclid's system as a *conceptual* construction is flawless and the question of validity does not enter. But there is such a thing as ' physical space ' and from the standpoint of that space the question of validity has to be asked.

That this question is by no means idle or fictitious, can be demonstrated by a remarkable argument which is essentially due to the great mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777–1855). Let us imagine that on the surface of the earth some intelligent creatures are crawling who are so constructed that they lack the concept of ' height '. They are attached to the surface of the earth and all their activities involve only the two dimensions, length and width. Since their proportions are small in comparison to the radius of the earth, they are unaware of the fact that

they live on a curved surface. To their knowledge their world is flat. Their geometrical imagination is very similar to ours—except for the third dimension which they do not possess—and they develop the Euclidean form of geometry. They accept without question the following 'common-sense proof' that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to 180°.



Imagine a man walking along the triangle. He starts out at the point C and walks in the direction of the point A, along the side *b*. He arrives at the point A and wants to continue his journey along the side *c*. For this purpose he must make a turn. The amount of this turn is exactly the angle *x* which is called the first 'external angle' of the triangle ABC. He now continues straight forward, until he arrives at the point B. Here again, in order to continue to the point C, he must turn again. The amount of this turn is exactly the angle *y* which is called the second external angle of the triangle ABC. Again he continues straight forward, until he arrives back at the point C from where he started his journey. However, if he wants to return into exactly the same position from which he started, he must turn once more, this time by the angle *z*, which is the third external angle of the triangle ABC.

Now, this man started from a certain position and returned once more into the same position. The total turn he took amounts to the sum $x+y+z$, since in the straight line portions he just walked straight and did not change his direction. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the man—since he started from a certain position and returned once more into the same position—has made a complete revolution of 360° around himself. This gives the relation

$$x+y+z=360°$$

But now the figure shows directly that if we add to each one of the external angles the corresponding internal angle, we get each time a straight line, i.e. an angle of 180°. Hence the total sum of internal and external angles amounts to three times 180°, i.e. 540°. This leaves the sum of the internal angles exactly 180°, since 360+180=540. And so we have demonstrated —by using nothing but common sense—that the sum of the angles of our triangle is 180°

But to return to the Flatlanders. A peculiar thing happens when these people—who have very accurate measuring instruments at their disposal —measure out a triangle of fairly large size. They find to their amazement that sum of the angles of the triangle is *not* equal to 180°. Now they revise carefully every step of the above proof and find that they have been mistaken in the use of ' common sense '. It is true that the man walking around the triangle made a complete revolution of 360° around himself. It is also true that in the process of this revolution he turned around by the three angles x, y, and z. But these angles are formed at *three different points* A, B, and C. In order to make a comparison with 360° it is necessary

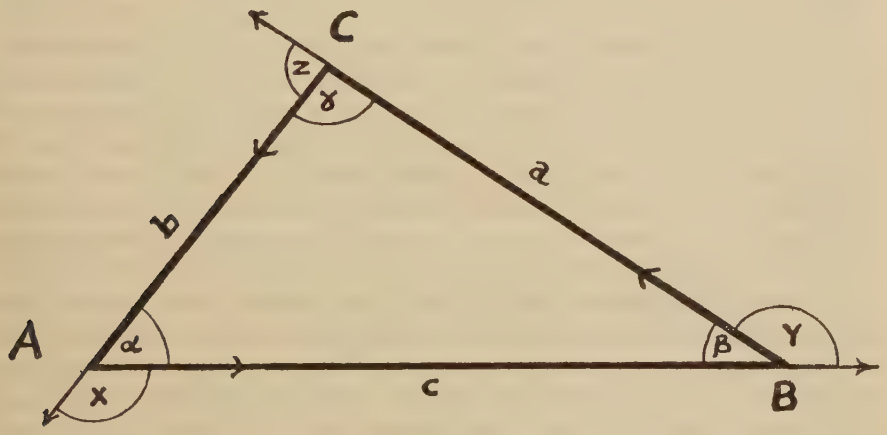


FIG. 3.

to *transplant* the external angles at A and B to the point C (Fig. 4). This demands that in transplanting the angles x and y we must construct at C the auxiliary lines d and d'. The sum of the two transplanted angles x' and y' plus the external angle at C (z) will be equal to 180° if, and only if, the two auxiliary lines coincide. If we accept the parallel postulate of Euclid the coincidence of d and d' is guaranteed because the lines from C which cut off the angles x' and y' must be parallel to c (according to the well-known Euclidean theorem : if parallel lines are cut by a third line

they form equal angles) and since in Euclidean geometry *only* one line parallel to a given line can pass through a given point, d and d' must form that unique parallel, that is, they must coincide. Finding that in their own case this does not occur, the Flatlanders conclude that Euclidean geometry need not apply to the space in which they live.

Hence they and we have been mistaken in our assumption that we have used ' nothing but common sense ' in the proof that $\alpha+\beta+\gamma=180°$. If we lay all our cards on the table, we find that while Euclid's postulates demand certain apparently plausible things, the actual physical space may not necessarily realize these things and may behave in a different way.

Here is an ingenious argument which clearly demonstrates the limited validity of Euclid's geometry. How can we answer it if we are bent on saving that validity? The only thing we can say is that a triangle constructed on the earth is not composed of straight lines since on the curved surface of the earth a ' straight line ' does not exist. But would this argument carry any weight with the Flatlanders? Could we tell them that they have no right to make a geometry in their world? They would be greatly surprised. They would point out to us that they can certainly stretch a string between two points which would assume the shape of a straight line. They would tell us that their straight line is defined as the shortest distance between two points which is certainly a justified and verifiable definition. Moreover, they have a very definite sense of ' direction ' and, if we want, they will define the straight line as a line which keeps its direction. In fact, any argument with these people would be useless since they share with us all our geometrical concepts and biases. And yet, in one respect they are in a peculiar situation. Conceptually they develop Euclid's geometry and are completely entitled to do so. But in applying this geometry to the space in which they live, they find that the conclusions drawn from the conceptual geometry and the actual geometrical measurements do not agree. They are then faced with the problem of how to modify the Euclidean postulates in order to bring them into harmony with the laws of the physical space in which they actually live.

This problem requires for its solution a thorough re-orientation of our geometrical thinking. Around the beginning of the nineteenth century, scepticism about the ' unchallenged ' rule of Euclidean geometry increased. But it was the towering genius of Gauss who injected an entirely new aspect into the study of geometry. Gauss completely rejected the Kantian view that space is not more than the *form* of our perception of the external world. For him it was quite clear that geometry is the same kind of science as mechanics. Just as we do not try to establish the laws of mechanics by philosophical reasoning but by physical observations, so the laws of geometry should also be based entirely on *measurements*. The Hanoverian government requested Gauss to serve as scientific advisor in

the geodetic surveying of the State of Hanover. It was in connection with this entirely practical, for Gauss rather burdensome, task that he came across a remarkable idea which became fundamental for the later development of science. On the earth we are living on a globe and not on a plane. This we know from optical observations (for example by observing the stars), or by circumnavigating the globe. But let us assume that the sky were eternally cloudy so that we could not see the stars or any other distant object. Let us assume, furthermore, that we had no means whatsoever of exploring the globe as a whole but were forced to stay on a small portion of the earth. Now Gauss has shown how by the mere process of triangulation, used in land surveying too complicated to describe here, that, without leaving the surface of the earth, and remaining on an arbitrarily small portion of it, we could nevertheless establish the fact that the earth is not flat but curved, and we could even measure the curvature of the earth's surface quite accurately. This was a great discovery, destined to put geometry on a completely new basis.

Today, of course, we have simpler and faster means for map-making than in the time of Gauss. Instead of a painstaking land surveying by gradual triangulation we can send up a host of aeroplanes which fly parallel to each other and which make at proper time intervals snapshots of the land below them. By putting these photographs together we can obtain a map of an arbitrarily large portion of the globe. But here again we can demonstrate the power of the Gaussian idea. If the earth were flat, all these aerial photographs could be laid out on the table to give a continuous picture of the world. But the curvature of the globe has a peculiar effect. These photographs somehow *crowd out each other,* if we lay them out on the table. If we paste them on a globe of properly chosen dimensions, they will fit together nicely. But if we want to lay them out flat, we have to *trim the edges,* with the result that places coincide which in actual fact are separated on the earth. Instead of an adequate picture we obtain a *distorted* picture of the world, thus demonstrating vividly the Gaussian discovery that the surface of a globe cannot be laid out on a plane without breaking the inner relations of that surface because the geometry of a sphere and the geometry of a plane are two basically different things. But—and this is the decisive point of the Gaussian discovery—the geometry on the surface of a sphere (or on *any* curved surface for that matter) *can* be consistently developed ; it yields a completely acceptable counterpart to the geometry of a plane, which happens to be Euclid's geometry.

The ingenious pupil of Gauss, Bernhard Riemann (1826–1866), generalized the ideas of Gauss from curved surfaces to curved spaces of any number of dimensions. In Riemann's geometry—in complete harmony with the programme of Gauss—it is no longer necessary to assume *any* postulates about the behaviour of straight lines and parallels, as was done

by Euclid. All we need is a small, rigid, calibrated yardstick, which we can carry along and with which we can measure small distances between any two points near enough to each other. If we tabulate the results of all these measurements, we possess the entire geometry of our space, without further postulates. The laws of geometry can now be deduced from the tabulated figures by mere mathematical analysis.

The geometry introduced by Riemann, called 'Riemannian geometry', was more flexible by far than the original geometry of Euclid. The postulates of Euclid are not completely abandoned, inasmuch as in *infinitely small* dimensions space has once more the Euclidean structure. In *finite*, that is measurable, dimensions, however, we obtain larger and larger deviations from the behaviour predicted by the Euclidean postulates. The reason why our geometrical imagination is so strongly Euclidean is that our mental images are abstracted from space experiences which hold in *small* domains. In order to extend these experiences to large domains we instinctively make use of the law of similarity, assuming that everything that happens in the small must happen also in the large. If we add to Riemann's assumptions the law of similarity, we are immediately back at Euclid's geometry. In Riemann's geometry the law of similarity is generally not satisfied and space can change its properties from point to point. Thus a triangle drawn on the Earth and a triangle drawn on the Moon need not necessarily have the same properties. And if we imagine a large triangle which is put into motion, this triangle is in a constant state of change. The lengths of the three sides can be kept unchanged but the three angles cannot remain constant. They have to adjust themselves to newer and newer spacial values as the triangle comes into newer and newer positions. All the assumptions made by Euclid relative to points and straight lines are only *approximately* true and that approximation becomes better and better as the extension of our figures shrink to smaller and smaller dimensions.

When Riemann came out with these astonishing ideas, the stir it caused was so negligible that he could not even publish his results. His now famous investigations concerning the foundations of geometry appeared in print only after his premature death in 1866. Even Gauss, in spite of his great prestige, did not dare to publish any of his results concerning 'non-Euclidean geometry' (that was the very word he coined, for it) because he was afraid of the hostility of his contemporaries. The tenets of Euclidean geometry were so firmly entrenched that it seemed utterly futile to express any doubt concerning them. The still more 'blasphemous' thought of Riemann that space may even change its properties from point to point, looked entirely ludicrous and not more than the fancy of a crazy mathematician. We must not forget that the full-fledged admission of highly abstract theories into the realm of physics is a very recent occurrence which came about grudgingly, after Einstein

demonstrated that abstract mathematical thinking can lead to spectacular results in the unriddling of natural phenomena. Even such an excellent mathematician as Henri Poincaré (1854–1912) had a completely negative view concerning the applicability of new-fangled geometrical theories to the realm of physics. He was well aware, of course, that non-Euclidean geometry is a distinct possibility, logically just as consistent as Euclidean geometry. But Poincaré had a completely practical and pragmatic approach to the question of physical theories. According to his view there is no such a thing as ' explaining ' the phenomena of nature. Our programme can only be that of *describing* them. But from the standpoint of description there is never a chance to find out what geometry is realized in the physical world, in fact the question is void of any meaning. Let us assume that we find as the result of some measurements that the sum of the angles of a triangle is not equal to 180°. Then there are two roads open to science. We may assume that the geometry of nature is of a non-Euclidean type. But we may equally assume that the geometry of nature is in fact Euclidean but the sides of the triangle are not straight but slightly bent. Both explanations are equally good, but Poincaré considered it as self-evident that for reasons of convenience everybody would choose the second alternative as the simpler of the two descriptions. This was as late as around 1908.

Under these circumstances it is quite natural that Riemann's far-seeing ideas were premature for his age. He himself had little doubt that his revolutionary re-formulation of the entire problem of geometry was much more than a mathematical dream. With prophetic vision he foresaw the day when the forces of physics would resolve themselves into purely geometrical entities. Sixty years later his forecast became reality through the genius of Albert Einstein.[1]

[1] Statutory Public Lecture, delivered on 5 April, 1959, in Trinity College, Dublin.

All This and The Abbey Too

by Gabriel Fallon

In his laudable search for a new Irish theatre in the Summer issue of Studies, Mr Thomas Kilroy treats of so many matters so breathlessly that it may help those of us who are with him in that search to sort these matters out before examining them at a closer range than Mr Kilroy's understandable excitement allows us.

To begin with he makes a plea for a little iconoclasm ; he feels we should be permitted to destroy those ' distracting monuments to the dead and glorious past of politics and art ' in order that ' the interesting faces of modern Ireland may crowd at every window of the theatre.' Presumably by this he does not mean that some of us are to inject a little dynamite into the base of Cuchulain's statue in the G.P.O. while the rest of us are boohing our heads off at some unlikely revival of *Kathleen Ní Houlihán* over in Pearse Street. I think he simply means that modern Ireland, or, more correctly, Mr Kilroy's conception of it, ought to be given some elbow room, so to speak, in order that it may express itself, presumably through its ' interesting faces,' in the theatre.

To this end he finds it necessary to arraign the existing Irish theatre. Not that the Irish theatre will object to being arraigned. Indeed, it is by now so inured to this procedure that it could almost find its way to the dock blindfolded. Let us examine the charge-sheet which Mr Kilroy has prepared. The Irish theatre has not been a creative theatre. It is not rooted in the society which supports it. It is lowering the standards of its actors and it is encouraging mediocre or merely adequate production by a succession of bad plays, of empty characterless comedies. It is a theatre which *provides for* the community, but it is very seldom, in any way, significant *of* it. So much, in the main, for the Irish theatre.

Mr Kilroy has not had an easy task in making this arraignment for he has had to consider theatres as divergent in their aims and output as the Olympia and the ' 37 ' Club ; Lord Longford's Gate and Edwards-MacLiammóir Productions ; the work of Cyril Cusack and the activity of the Globe Theatre ; and, of course, the Abbey. I do not imagine that he had the latter in mind when, for instance, he wrote : ' The policies of our theatres, almost without exception, are determined by talented directors or actors with a keen eye for material which will exploit their talents to the fullest.' That could hardly apply to the Abbey Theatre.

But before considering the charges which Mr Kilroy does very definitely level at the Abbey, let us observe him arranging the playwrights. To begin with, few of them have been in any way exciting technically. More often, however, they have been guilty of a worse defect than mere lack of technical proficiency. They are inclined to shirk the painful, sometimes tragic problems of a modern Ireland which is undergoing considerable social and ideological stress.

Mr Kilroy generously admits that the criticism underlying these charges is a harsh criticism. He tells us that it is always easy to criticize. He assures us that he readily acknowledges the achievements of the Irish theatre (though he fails to mention them). And to make amends for the harshness of his criticism he presents us with two variations on a ' theatre workshop ' theme by devoting over one-third of his article to an examination of the aims and achievements of London's East End Theatre Workshop and the English State Company based on the Royal Court Theatre in London's Sloane Square.

Since Mr Kilroy throughout his article sets much store on the importance of a workshop theatre ' where apprenticeship and practical demonstration is offered to an aspiring playwright ' it is suprising to find him completely ignoring the Abbey Experimental Theatre which sounded its opening gong on 5 April, 1937 and existed (to quote its Director, Miss Ria Mooney) ' for the production of plays by Irish authors whose work was considered not suitable or not sufficiently advanced technically for production on the Abbey stage, and yet was of sufficiently high standard to merit public presentation.' Its production that evening was Mr Mervyn Wall's *Alarm Among the Clerks*. This Abbey Experimental Theatre continued to function as long as ' experiments ' were available, filling in with presentations of continental plays by such authors as Lorca, Strindberg and Gerard de Nerval. Mr Kilroy's strange omission seems to move on a level with that (to quote Mr Austin Clarke) ' highly controversial and prejudiced work ' Dr Peter Kavanagh's *The Story of the Abbey Theatre* which, having accused the Abbey of shamefully neglecting Yeats, carried on its dust jacket a delightfully coloured photograph of Miss Mooney's production of *The Dreaming of the Bones*.

In the light of Mr Kilroy's examples e.g. the English Stage Company (which incidentally, is barely three years old) and Miss Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop (which, somewhat older, has been characterized from its beginning by a marked social bias) it is difficult to see why Mr Kilroy elected to by-pass the Irish equivalent. It is equally difficult to see why he did not mention the fact that the plans for the new Abbey make elaborate provision for a similar experimental theatre.

It is possible, however, that he has something additional in mind, for elsewhere in his article he refers to that ' communal atmosphere ' which is created ' when the dramatist and actor depend upon one another, even

to a slight extent, for inspiration' ; and he instances Shakespeare and Burbage and couples with them O'Casey and Fitzgerald. Whatever difficulty we might have in reconstructing with any degree of accuracy the relationship between the former pair, we know all that is to be known about the latter. Mr O'Casey himself in what has been described not inaptly as his ' mastodonic six-volume 2,156-page autobiography' has told the story of his relationship with Mr Fitzgerald. In common with other playgoers he saw and admired Mr Fitzgerald's acting from an Abbey pit seat. He subsequently saw and admired it from the stalls. The more he saw it, the more he admired it. He then met Mr Fitzgerald socially. But it was the pit-and-stall relationship and not the social relationship that urged Mr O'Casey to write parts for Mr Fitzgerald ; and, may we add, for Mr McCormick and Miss Allgood and the rest of the Abbey Theatre company. This, of course, is a relationship between dramatist and actor which is open to any dramatist in any repertory theatre at any time ; and it is in a very real sense a ' theatre workshop ' relationship. And when some of us to-day commiserate with Mr O'Casey on the loss of his ' theatre workshop ' and on being compelled to dramatize *in vacuo* this is what we have in mind. It is this relationship which urges Mr George Devine, the Director of the English Stage Society (so much admired by Mr Kilroy) in a debate held by the *Universities and Left Review* (and reported in the Mar.-April, 1959, issue of *Encore*) to list the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, with the theatres of Berthold Brecht and Lorca, the Group Theatre, the Granville Barker Court Season, and the English Group Theatre of the thirties, as theatres which could lay claim to vitality.

Mr Kilroy deplores what he calls ' deliberate attempts to teach theatrecraft, especially the craft of the dramatist ' and for this reason he looks askance at schools of playwriting in American Universities though he appears to forget Professor George Pierce Baker's ' 47 ' class at Harvard, to which its most brilliant pupul, Eugene O'Neill, paid generous tribute. He wants something within the confines of the theatre itself ; and it appears that he expects the theatre to function efficiently as a theatre and at the same time to act as wet nurse to aspiring dramatists. So much depends, of course, on what Mr Kilroy requires from his dramatists. It should not be impossible to find this out, for on the one hand he tells us that ' the great dramatist should be familiar with every aspect of stage craft, not as a specialist but as a skilled worker who knows precisely how the tools of his trade are used ' ; and on the other hand, he accuses the present generation of dramatists of shrinking from ' the painful, sometimes tragic problems of a modern Ireland which is undergoing considerable social and ideological events.' This gives us, synthetically, a picture of a dramatist closely resembling an amalgam of the sociological side of Ibsen with the drive and efficiency of Bernard

Shaw. Mr Kilroy's admiration for the activity of Miss Littlewood's ideological Theatre Workshop tends to fix the picture. But ' synthetically ' is perhaps the operative word in the second last sentence ; and it is doubtful if dramatists, even great dramatists, are made this way. Let us look at one example.

When Mr O'Casey delivered the script of *Juno and the Paycock* to the Directors of the Abbey Theatre, he was by no means familiar with every aspect of stagecraft nor could he have told you precisely how the tools of his trade are used. Indeed, he made clear on more than one occasion what he thought of those who, from Aristotle onwards, talked or wrote of tools or trade or stagecraft in the theatre. Nor was he moved consciously by the tragic problems of the Ireland of his time or by its social ideological events. He had written a play, a play about people, and he was conscious only that the stuff of drama is the stuff of human experience. He would have agreed with Alan Tate that the writer's function is to render the image of man as he is in his time ; and he would have felt disposed to accept Francis Fergusson's contention that the instinct to project images of human life is basic. (Though it might not have been quite wise at that time to advocate his reading such reviews as *The Hudson*, *The Kenyon*, or *The Sewanee*.) But he had no conscious pre-occupation with stagecraft or with social and ideological events so far as his playwriting was concerned. That was to come later, much later, in Mr O'Casey's career ; and it was to come to his detriment as a dramatist. When Mr O'Casey was working on *Juno and the Paycock* he was unconsciously doing it for a purpose (touched upon by Paul Claudel when writing to Jacques Rivière in 1912) viz. ' to free himself of a great incubus of living matter. *Opus non factum.* And certainly not to cover a cold artificial design by borrowings from reality.' So much, for the moment, for Mr Kilroy and the author in the theatre.

Let us now examine what he has to say about the actor. He makes the charge that theatre policies are in many instances determined by talented directors or actors ' with a keen eye for material which will exploit their talent to the fullest.' From this charge he will, I fell certain, exempt Lord Longford's theatre, where the actors have no say in the selection of plays ; and the Abbey where a similar situation prevails and where, in Mr Kilroy's opinion, neither the directors nor the actors are talented. In fairness to the rest it must be said that the selection of plays for the purpose of exploiting acting talent is only incidental to the primary purpose of securing a play which will keep the box-office busy. Yet even in this it would be manifestly unfair, in the light of the known programmes presented by actor-director managements, to accuse them of being indifferent to the quality of the play.

Obviously it is the Abbey Mr Kilroy has in mind when he accuses the Irish theatre of lowering the standards of acting and production

by a succession of bad plays and empty characterless comedies. There is nothing particularly new about this charge. It was made when the Abbey Theatre was scarcely out of its swaddling clothes. It has been made many times since then. The files of *The Leader*, *The Irish Statesman* and *The Irish Times* are heavy with its reiteration. Few of the actors who, for one reason or another, have had to leave the Abbey Theatre, have neglected to give voice to it. Almost every rejected playwright has applied it as balm to his wounded vanity. Yet it is simply not true. At one time it was fashionable to assert that whenever the standard of playwriting is low acting talent is sure to be in the ascendant. This was a favourite contention of Mr Bernard Shaw and it is echoed, almost as gospel truth, by Mr St John Ervine in *The Theatre in My Time*. The classic example used is that of Sir Henry Irving in *The Bells* and in *The Story of Waterloo*. To-day's critics want it both ways. Bad plays must inevitably breed bad actors ; while good plays (by which they generally mean plays of their own writing or choosing) will infallibly raise the standards of acting and production. If evidence were needed of the consistently high quality of Abbey Theatre acting and production (evidence distinct and apart from the recurring tributes paid by disinterested outside sources) it was to be found a few months ago in the presentation of Eugene O'Neill's *A Long Day's Journey into Night* in which a group of players stepped right out of so-called 'characterless comedy' and with apparent ease scaled the peaks of modern tragedy in a manner which won honourable commendation even from some who are allegedly opposed to the Abbey's principles. The players of the Abbey Theatre need no defence. Their work, for those with eyes to see it, carried its own reputation along with it, and leaves an indelible impression on visitors to our shores. It was not without good reason that William Smith Clark of the University of Minnesota, in a preface to his *Early Irish Stage*, declared that 'Ireland, in proportion to her human resources, has enriched the art of the stage and the screen in the twentieth century more than any other segment of the English-speaking world.'

Mr Kilroy's approach to the third A of theatre—the audience—is some what ambiguous. Applauding Miss Littlewood for her statement (which he confirms as a 'truth') : 'I really do believe in the community, I really do believe in the genius of every person', he is unnecessarily equivocal in his attitude towards audience reaction which he stigmatises on the one hand as possibly 'a dangerous misleading form of observation' but which he lauds on the other hand as being 'the quickest indication of the strength and nature of the bond between a theatre and the society which supports it.' Well, which is it ? Box-office receipts, as every theatre manager knows, are not misleading ; what is more they are an infallible indication of audience-reaction in which Mr Kilroy professes to see the strength and nature of the bond

between a theatre and the society which supports it. And Mr Kilroy is right to see this. But his perception in this matter is at variance with his charge that the Irish theatre *provides for* the community but is seldom in any way significant *of* it, with his charge that the Irish theatre is not rooted in the society which supports it. The society which supports the theatre in any country does so by virtue of that bond which exists between itself and the theatre. It will continue to support the theatre only to the extent that those whose business it is to provide theatre for the community continue to honour that bond. In other words audiences will go to the theatre only to see what they want to see and what they want to see is something of themselves. This is the nature of the bond which exists between a theatre and the society which supports it ; and it is folly to suggest that such a theatre is not rooted in that society or not significant of it. The so-called ' bad plays and empty characterless comedies ' which Mr Kilroy would exchange for dramatisations of ' the painful, sometimes tragic, problems of Ireland ' are in so far as they mirror the prevailing conditions of society an integral part of these tragic problems and will continue to be so until some dramatist of explosive greatness will come to persuade society that his mirror holds a clearer, truer image ; and again they will flock to honour the bond that exists between themselves and the theatre. They did so when O'Casey came, with the result that those critics (including some Irish poets and novelists of distinction) who attempt to obtain status by a show of erudition and exclusiveness, declared that the days of the Abbey Theatre were numbered, and that this new and incompetent dramatist had delivered a poetic foundation over to vulgarity and the mob. This is a chapter of Abbey Theatre history which is all too conveniently forgotten by that school of criticism that proposes a love of Ionesco which casteth out McCann.

When Mr Kilroy presses home his charges by pointing his finger at the Abbey ' because we are more concerned about its development than that of any other theatre ' he merely succeeds in indicating the poverty of his brief. For instance, he states that by virtue of an annual grant of £3,800 (his figures) the Abbey Theatre ' is the only theatre in Ireland in a position to encourage undeveloped but potentially good play-writing.' He ignores the fact that since the disastrous fire of 1951 the Abbey Theatre has been living in a state of economic desperation at the Queen's. He has already ignored the existence of the Abbey Experimental Theatre before that fire. He makes no mention whatever of the fact that provision has been made for an Experimental Theatre in the new Abbey (despite many public references to it). He appears to think, or to lull his readers into thinking, that the running of a theatre is a simple affair, that if there are profits there are no such things as losses ; that rent, light, insurance and salary bills need not be met

provided the potential playwright is being properly looked after. Let him ask the managements of Olympia or the Gaiety or the Gate how quickly one may lose, let alone spend, £3,800 in the theatre and they will quickly tell him.

He quotes Mr Blythe, the Managing Director of the Abbey, to the effect that on an average 200 plays a year are submitted. According to the late Dr Lennox Robinson 'ninety per cent of the plays received are worthless.' If there seems to be any worth in a play, it goes to the Directors. 'The Theatre' said Dr Robinson 'is always seeking for a new masterpiece, a new Synge, a new O'Casey.' What Dr Robinson did not say was that every rejected script helps towards increasing the number of the Abbey Theatre's critics. Mr Kilroy names three plays which he declares were rejected by the Abbey Theatre and were subsequently produced successfully elsewhere—*The Quare Fella, Decision at Easter* and *Sive*. So far as I am aware only one of these plays, in final form, was rejected by the Abbey Theatre. Having seen *Decision at Easter* presented at the Gate Theatre I see no reason to quarrel with its rejection. It was simply a clever piece of dramatised journalism and not a play. I have no doubt, however, that had the Abbey Experimental Theatre been in existence, it would have been presented there. Mr Behan's play I saw long before it, or I, became a part of the Abbey. At the Pike I considered it as providing material for a masterpiece. When I saw it at the Abbey, I questioned my former opinion. *Sive* for all its trophies is not a great play ; it is only by virtue of its dialogue and of its excellent presentation by Listowel's amateurs that it is a passably good one. Mr Kilroy omits to mention that the Listowel Players were generously afforded the stage of the Abbey Theatre for their production of *Sive* : but perhaps he hints at this in his reference to 'belated protests and gesture . . . unworthy of a National Theatre.' Much less worthy in its own way is his implied suggestion that such a theatre should make itself both a home and a hospital for the aspiring playwright.

It is interesting to note that Mr George Devine is not as elated about the success of his own and Miss Littlewood's experiments as Mr Kilroy appears to be. In the *Universities and Left Review* debate, already mentioned above, he had this to say :

> To-day in London we have, on the sort of level we are talking about, the Theatre Workshop, sometimes the Arts Theatre, and I suppose I must be allowed to say the Royal Court. But let us remember that there is no regular audience at any of these theatres, certainly not at Theatre Workshop or the Royal Court.

It is good to hear Mr Devine acknowledging a theatre's need for regular audiences. Too often the critic-in-a-hurry or the theatre-lover

with an axe to grind tends to forget this over-ruling need. When Mr Devine pointed to the Abbey as one of the few theatres which could lay claim to vitality he had, no doubt, the importance of a regular audience in mind. He goes on to enquire why such theatres as his own and Miss Littlewood's lack regular audiences :

> I am asking this question—is a theatre of this sort really wanted ? If it is not wanted, does the cause lie in society itself—in other words the audience—or does it lie in the theatres ? Now the truth obviously lies somewhere between, but where ? My inclination is to put it closer to the theatre than society.

Mr Devine then charges the members of the *Universities and Left Club* with too much and too little action and with failing to support Miss Littlewood's organization :

> I consider that if this club is really interested in live theatre it should pledge itself to support a theatre, and I should have thought, without being falsely modest that the theatre it should support should be Theatre Workshop. If you would like to support me I shan't complain but if every member of this Society were to pledge himself to buy two seats for every play that Miss Littlewood put on at Theatre Workshop and guaranteed to send two guests, Miss Littlewood would not be crawling around on her hands and knees trying to get a thousand quid out of the Arts Council.

Poor Miss Littlewood ! This is a very different picture from Mr Kilroy's ' uninhibited woman with the frankness of one of her coal-miners . . . continually looking for this greatness in people, particularly in new young playwrights.' If Mr Devine is to be believed, the future for new young playwrights at the Theatre Workship—despite Mr Brendan Behan and Miss Shelagh Delaney—is not particulary bright.

The Abbey Theatre is now in its fifty-fifth year. One doubts if there was a year in that fifty-five in which the Abbey was not accused of bedding down Ireland's dramaturgy into a ' rut of sophisticated triviality ', that rut from which Mr Kilroy aspires to release it. Possibly the quickest way in which Mr Kilroy could bring this about would be for him to become in the shortest possible space of time a startlingly good dramatist ; and to induce as many as possible of his friends to follow his example. He charges the Abbey and indeed the Irish theatre in general with neglecting its ' workshop ' duty towards the aspiring dramatist ; yet, strangely enough, he omits all reference to the establishment of the Abbey Experimental Theatre and its proposed continuance in the new building. Incidentally, this Experimental Theatre was neither available nor essential to the growth of Sean O'Casey whose ' theatre workshop ' practice consisted in regular attendance at the Abbey Theatre. Should Mr Kilroy shun attendance there on the grounds that he might

become contaminated with its 'sophisticated triviality', it may interest him to learn that it was this 'sophisticated triviality' ('rubbish' was Lady Gregory's word for it) acting as a fertilising process on the innate genius of the man and his consummate love of the theatre that led to the emergence of Sean O'Casey.

It is impossible for man, let alone the theatre, to live continuously on the heights. If the act of living is to go on it must be along roads that wind through valleys as well as up hill. There were always periods in the history of the Abbey Theatre of which it was possible to say : 'this is near the ground' or 'that is taking a bearing in the stars.' In February of this year Henry Brandon, the Washington correspondent of *The Sunday Times*, reported an interview with the eminent American critic, Edmund Wilson. In the course of this interview Mr Wilson drew attention to the fact that there had been two great literary periods in the U.S., the first before the Civil War and the second some forty years after it. In between was a bad period for literature. We, too, alas, have had our Civil War and it may well be that it has adversely affected our theatre. However, be that as it may, the immediacy of a sudden and unexpected rise in the graph of Irish dramaturgy is the only hope I can offer Mr Kilroy in his search for a new Irish theatre and for the speedy coming of that day in which he shall possess all that he desires theatrically, and, of course, the Abbey too.

Louis Bautain: Apologist and Apostle

by PAUL POUPARD

BAUTAIN'S is an interesting and markedly individual personality, typical of his century, especially in its early years of struggle to shake off the effects of Revolution. Born in Paris of well-to-do parents on 17 February 1796 (28 Pluviose of the year 4), he grew up in the uneasy atmosphere of Napoleon's reign. A child of the Revolution, of the Empire and of the Restoration, Louis-Eugène-Marie Bautain managed to learn only a few scraps of catechism which were quickly forgotten. Like his friend, Jouffroy, and so many other young men of the day, Bautain lost his faith. As a student of philosophy in the École Normale where he learnt the sensism of Condillac, he came under the influence of Victor Cousin who, though largely forgotten today, was prominent in contemporary philosophical circles as chief exponent of the new eclecticism. Everyone claims knowledge of the truth but no one possesses it in its fulness ; hence the necessity of appealing to all the different systems in order to work out a synthesis ; such was Cousin's line of reasoning. It was simple, too simple, in fact, for, in such an investigation, what is to be the infallible criterion of truth ? ' General reason,' answers Cousin, thus approaching Lamennais's concept of ' common sense '. But it is at this very point that Bautin's first criticism arises : how can ' general reason ' be infallible since it is simply the sum of the individual reasons which were declared fallible at the outset ? [1]

After a brilliant course of studies the young philosopher was appointed, on 12 August 1816, to the chair of philosophy at the Collège Royal of Strasbourg ; October of the following year saw him promoted, though only twenty-one, to the Chair of Philosophy in Strasbourg's university. There followed some years of intense labour : abandoning the eclectic method, Bautain set out on a long voyage of intellectual discovery which would lead him at last to Catholicism by way of idealistic rationalism. For it was in Strasbourg, the meeting point between France and Germany, that he discovered the systems of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, then at the height of their glory, and succumbed to these great philosophical syntheses which seemed to offer him a completely satisfying explanation of reality. Initial enthusiasm, however, soon gave place to grave misgivings : idealism, for all the brilliant development of its ideas and beauty of its

[1] For a more complete study and criticism of Bautain's thought cf. Poupard *La philosophie du Christianisme de l'Abbé Bautain*, Angers : Université Catholique, 1959.

expression, does not solve the problem of human destiny. Neither Kantian nor post-Kantian philosophy could satisfy Bautain's need for truth.

In 1820 there occurred an event which set his course in the direction from which he would never turn aside : his discovery in Christianity of a solution to the vital questions left unanswered by philosophy. This change of thought was brought about by his meeting with Louise Humann, a cultivated Alsatian laywoman with leanings towards a rather romantic mysticism. Her influence partially explains Bautain's subsequent rejection of what he had formerly adored : the power of human reason. Years later he wrote as follows of the sudden illumination received at this time :

> I read the Gospel of Jesus Christ as a seeker after truth ; I found in it, together with a most profound knowledge of man and nature, a moral code at once simple and sublime. I was carried away by admiration . . . The light of the Gospel, as it were, restored me to life. The scales fell from my eyes.

On 8 September 1822 Bautain returned to the sacraments. The Bishop of Strasbourg, Mgr le Pappe de Trévern, impressed by the gifted and generous young convert, raised Bautain to the priesthood on 20 December 1822, after a mere three months of theological studies. Henceforth his university lectures were devoted to expounding his new conception of reality, which he liked to sum up in a phrase of St Augustine, (from *De vera religione* V) : ' Non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiae studium, et aliam religionem : philosophy, which is the study of wisdom, is nothing else but religion.' For the rest of his life Bautain would be ruled by one conviction and would spend himself in communicating it to others : the only true philosophy is *The Philosophy of Christianity*.[1]

What precisely did this statement mean to Bautain ? He was first and foremost an apologist. He wished to share with his contemporaries, whose preoccupations, demands and prejudices were so well known to him, the spiritual enlightenment which he had himself received. In his writings,[2] just as in his university lectures, it is an apologist who speaks. But he speaks, as a philosopher, to the philosophers of his time, absorbed in the quest for truth, even as he himself had been before his discovery of Christianity. To these philosophers Bautin proves in the first place that no philosophy, past or present, is capable of solving their problems in a completely satisfying way. In none of the various systems can they find the fulfilment of their ' desire for a speculative knowledge of truth, combined with a practical and conclusive solution to the problem of

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[1] *The Philosophy of Christianity* is Bautain's main work, containing the essence of his thought, and expressing by its very title the central idea of his life.

[2] For a complete list of Bautain's writings cf. our study mentioned above, n.1. The most important unedited documents which throw light on Bautain's thought and activity are conserved in various archives at Monaghan, Paris, Juilly, Strasbourg, Tübingen and Rome (Italy and Vatican State)

human destiny '. He next presents the doctrine of Christianity in philosophical terms, showing that it alone satisfies and satisfies fully the need for explanation which gives rise to philosophic inquiry. Now it should be noted that philosophy, for Bautain, besides being a matter of technical definitions is always an answer to man's most fundamental questions : what is man ? what of his origin and destiny ? what is the meaning of life ? how can man find perfect fulfilment ? Moreover, in raising these questions he speaks the language of his contemporaries ; witness the following significant passage :

> There is a certain little book which we give to children, and on which they are examined in church ; read this little book—the catechism —and you will find answered in it all the questions which I have raised in my teaching of philosophy—all without exception. Ask the Christian whence comes the human race ; he knows. The origin of the world and of the species, man's destiny here and hereafter, his relations with God and his duties towards his fellows, his rights over nature ;—on none of these points will the Christian be found ignorant, for all this knowledge flows clearly and as a matter of course from the doctrine of Christianity, which does not leave unsolved any question of interest to humanity.

This philosophy of Christianity Bautain wishes to make as acceptable to philosophers as to the children of the catechism-class. Accordingly, he presents Christian doctrine as the keystone of the arch of knowledge, linking coherently and locking into position the various human sciences, ranged under what Bautain would soon hear being called ' *his* philosophy ' although he persistently described it as simply ' Christian doctrine scientifically explained '.

Such was the approach by which he aimed at reconciling to the faith the many intellectuals who had wandered from it since the eighteenth century. In Bautain's view, this large-scale defection from the Church could be explained, at least partially, by the current apologetic method. Contaminated by the technique and even by the ideas of their adversaries, the French clergy had succumbed to rationalism. A change of tactics was clearly needed : vain efforts to establish faith on a foundation of reason must give place to appreciation of the fact that reason is only fully itself when it is grounded in faith. This was to re-echo some leading ideas of the theological traditionalism of the time ; it meant also, however, that these ideas received a bias towards a kind of intuitionism, which regarded tradition as merely the vehicle of a primitive revelation, capable of being apprehended only by personal discovery of the intellect. And intellect is here conceived of as the faculty which forms ideas, perceives truth and weighs evidence, thus becoming the source of a certainty based on faith.

On this foundation Bautain constructed his *Philosophy of Christianity*. If questioned as to the nature of his system—whether theological or

philosophical—he would have replied that terms matter little as long as truth is attained ; since truth is one, it must be permissible to aim at constructing a comprehensive science, one, like truth itself ; admittedly this science cannot be perfect because only God can have a complete knowledge of the world which He has created. Its basis must in every case be Divine Revelation. For rational inquiry will be fruitless when applied to a truth which, in St Paul's words, was given to us by God ' at sundry times and in divers manners . . . . (but) last of all . . . . by His Son,' (Hebrews I, i), and which becomes accessible to the intellect once it has been admitted by faith.

Reason goes astray when it walks alone in search of truth, as Bautain repeatedly showed from the history of philosophy. If, on the other hand, reason is content to follow the road traced out by faith, it can illuminate all with which it comes in contact. Possessing at the outset a principle of explanation which it could never find in itself, by analogy it makes all the applications of it to the material world, which natural means of cognition can discover. Visible and invisible worlds accordingly blend in a higher synthesis, which will only be fully apprehended when, at the close of earth's pilgrimage, the intellect will contemplate all things in the clear light of God. All things will then stand revealed, just as on the first day man in the state of original justice shared in the knowledge of God, and enjoyed a unified vision of the world which sin was soon to render fragmentary and obscure.

Bautain now develops what he calls the great metaphysical ideas : the triune God and creator of free beings through love ; evil introduced into the world by the free creature's sin ; his redemption accomplished by the second Adam. And these, in Bautain's terminology, are *metaphysical* ideas, because they alone can perfectly explain the internal and external data of human experience, of which philosophy seeks to render an account.

But the resulting synthesis rests on a conception of the relationship between reason and religion which immediately calls in question the traditional view of apologetics and of the rational intelligibility of Christian doctrine. The bishop of Strasbourg, it will be remembered, had ordained Bautain without giving him time for the usual theological formation, in order to make him at once rector of his diocesan Séminaire Saint-Louis. In this position his teaching betrayed a certain opposition to scholastic philosophy, as an outmoded and dangerous system, useless, in any case, for leading modern man to the faith. Such views naturally caused grave concern to Mgr de Trévern, who had done his theological studies in the old Sorbonne, a veritable stronghold of scholasticism. Soon the rector and his bishop were at loggerheads about what the latter called ' Bautain's mongrel philosophy '.

As not infrequently happens in such cases, personal feelings aggravated the doctrinal disagreement. A further complicating factor was the failure on both sides to speak the same language. They used the same words but understood them differently. The bishop quite rightly insisted that reason can lead us to the existence of God and to the fact of the Jewish-Christian revelation ; this was understood by Bautain as an attempt to eliminate grace and the assent of faith, reducing the latter, as Hermes[1] did, to a mere rational conclusion of a well constructed syllogism. When Bautain, for his part, maintained that proofs of themselves will never compel belief—witness Our Lord's miracles which produced as much incredulity as faith among his contemporaries—the bishop accused him of undermining the intellectual structure of religion and making faith a matter of intuition and sentiment.

For years the dispute dragged on, neither party budging from its initial position. Episcopal threats led eventually to ecclesiastical penalties, while Abbé Bautain held firmly to the conviction that he was, in fact, defending the Catholic faith against the current pervading semi-rationalism. Strasbourg and France were divided. On the morrow of Bautain's suspension the Catholic university of Tübingen conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Theology, asking him to see in this gesture an encouragement to persevere in his services to the cause of truth.[2] The alarm raised in Rome by Mgr de Trévern did not result in formal condemnation ; rather it was considered that

> Apostolic condemnation would be, not only unnecessary, but inopportune, and more injurious than helpful to the interests of religion . . . silence, however, was not to be interpreted as tacit approval or disapproval of Abbé Bautain.[3]

Still more significantly, Bautain made an excellent impression when, on the advice of his friend, Lacordaire, the famous Dominican, he visited Rome in 1838. From Pope Gregory XVI he received a testimonial of approbation with the words ' he had sinned only by excess of faith.'

The foregoing brief summary will indicate how confused is the story of what has generally been called ' Bautain's Fideism ' ; it should also make clear that it is at least inexact to speak of his condemnation. Rome never required him to account in full for the rather bluntly worded propositions successively formulated by the bishop of Strasbourg, and dated respectively, 30 April and 15 September 1834, 18 November 1835

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[1] Condemned by the Papal brief *Dum acerbissimas*, 26 September 1835.

[2] ' Letter of Möhler to Bautain on the relation between reason and faith ' in *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, pp. 445-482, Paris, July 1958.
' Abbé Bautain und die Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät Tübingen,' in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, pp. 460-470, Tübingen, December 1958.

[3] Vatican secret archives, *Segretaria di Stato, Parigi Nunzio*, 1835, No. 620, 7 January. Note of Mgr Garibaldi, Papal Nuncio to Paris.

and 8 September 1840. It was only on 26 April 1844 that the Sacred Congregation for Bishops and Regulars, when authorizing Bautain to found the religious community of St Louis nuns, obliged him to sign a formulary consisting of four propositions, which were, however, much milder in tone than those of Mgr de Trévern. Bautain thereby acknowledged (i) that reason is capable of demonstrating the existence of God, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and the truths of the moral law ; (ii) that reason can attain the principles of metaphysics, and by means of them constitute a distinct science of supernatural theology, founded upon revelation ; (iii) that reason can reach certainty on the motives of belief.[1]

The dispute, re-opened with Bonnetty in 1855 and again in 1860 with the professors of Louvain, was to reach final settlement in the dogmatic pronouncements of the Vatican Council. Since that time other documents of the *magisterium* have clarified still further the teaching of the Church on this point. Consider the following summary of Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical *Humani Generis :*

> Divine revelation is morally necessary so that religious and moral truths, which, in themselves, are not inaccessible to reason, may, in the present state of humanity, be placed within the reach of all, easily, with absolute certainty, and without any admixture of error.

The controversy about Fideism appears, then, in the history of Catholic thought in the nineteenth century, as a milestone on the road to dogmatic definition of the relations between reason and faith. As for the system worked out by Bautain, its noble purpose must be underlined to reconcile—in his own words which are never those of a specialist—science and faith, philosophy and theology, by making Christianity stand forth as the only philosophy capable in its coherence and interpretative power of being pitted against the ambitious syntheses of idealism. To his contemporaries, weary of the reasoned apologetics of the previous century, Bautain revealed in Christianity the only admissible explanation of the origin, history and destiny of the world and of humanity—in a word, wisdom. Thus he substituted for the ' chimera of a philosophic religion the truth of a Christian philosophy.' ' True philosophy ' he liked to say, ' is religion.'

This central affirmation, which Bautain develops in a way that is all too frequently naïve or obscure, may appear *simpliste* today, yet it contains much that is ingenious and persuasive. Seen against the background of early nineteenth century Romanticism, and examined in relation to contemporary trends of thought, its strength and its weakness are revealed. Resentment against the philosophy which had deceived and disappointed him led Bautain to base his apologetic in defiance of reason on the

[1] For the text of these doctrinal formularies cf. appendix to study mentioned above, n.1.

postulate that all certainty presupposes faith. Presenting ' the Christian fact ' as the only valid answer to the questionings of man, he finds in Revelation the sole vehicle of that truth to which the human intellect cannot of itself attain. Thus he grafts Revelation as a source of certainty on to epistemology, instead of rising to the properly theological level. He seems, in fact, to welcome faith as a refuge from the labour of rational investigation.

Granted that the resulting apologetic proceeds by way of 'testimony' rather than by that of demonstration, and that Bautain was unjustified in systematizing to such an extent his technique for winning converts ; granted, too, that many of his statements lack philosophical exactitude, it remains true, nevertheless, that his language went home to his contemporaries. Witness the disciples whom he attracted to himself from widely differing milieux : de Bonnechose, an ex-barrister, future Cardinal-Archbishop of Rouen ; Ratisbonne, formerly a lawyer who was destined to found the double Congregation of Our Lady of Sion ; Gratry, the restorer of the Oratory of France ; Maricourt, future rector of the Catholic university of Angers. Witness, also, the remarkable movement of conversions from Judaism and Protestantism which followed Bautain's teaching and preaching, first at Strasbourg and later at Paris where, as Superior of the Collège of Juilly and Vicar-General of Mgr Sibour, he multiplied lectures, conferences, sermons and retreats until his death in October 1867. Witness, finally, the Congregation of the Sisters of St Louis, whose vitality is attested by a century of fruitful apostolate in Ireland.

In founding this Congregation Abbé Bautain's purpose was to extend the influence of the Gospel through education of youth. The truly Christian formation of minds and hearts required, in his view, a community of teaching nuns in which ' learning and charity would reign together ' :

> . . . the spirit of Christian charity must be united with devotion to learning . . . The light of knowledge, animated by the fire of love, warms and nourishes souls. Accordingly, the members of the Society of St Louis shall be distinguished at the same time for learning and charity, and shall use every human instrument of knowledge in order to reveal to souls the Eternal Truth. Skilled in divine and human knowledge, and acquainted with all the methods of presenting the truth and establishing it in the souls of their charges, they will be able to open their minds to the truth of the Gospel and implant firmly in their hearts the charity of Jesus Christ.

This programme evidently implies a thorough formation, intellectual, as well as moral and religious :

> The development of intellectual gifts and of divine charity should keep pace with and strengthen each other, so that all the members of the Society of St Louis may be marked by a blend of enlightened zeal and

> culture informed by charity . . . (They should) possess the divine knowledge transmitted by the Church, together with the human knowledge of which the world has need, and which can be used to influence the world in order to lead the world back to the Church and subordinate the wisdom of man to the wisdom of God.

Such is the ideal for which Abbé Bautain's spiritual daughters have constantly laboured, in France, Belgium, and, since 1859, in Ireland, whence they have made foundations in England, West Africa and California. Through them their Founder's influence as apostle and apologist continues still.

The Meaning Doesn't Matter?

SOME REFLECTIONS ON MODERN ABSTRACT PAINTING

PART II[1]

by CYRIL BARRETT

'MODERN art demands a willingness to accept nonsense as sense', Sir John Summerson once wrote in a review. 'The *prima facie* case that modern art is obscure nonsense seems to me . . . as manifestly true as that trains are late. I do not see how any discussion of the subject can proceed except after agreement on the point.' There is no doubt about the obscurity. Nonsense seems a bit strong, but if discussion is to break down because of a word, nonsense it shall be. We begin therefore on the understanding that modern art—and Sir John was not talking about abstract art alone—is nonsense. After all that is the way the abstract painters themselves talk about their work. They do not use the word 'nonsense', but that is what the pretentious equivalents come to. For some (the school of Zen, for example) it is an enlightenment which surpasses understanding: beyond sense, so to speak. For others, it is the creative act, the expression of the unconscious, the awareness of reality which preceeds understanding and which sense obscures and destroys. If this is not nonsense, it is at least non-sense. It is experienced and felt rather than understood.

Let us take it then that abstract art is not for understanding and see what we can make of it. Instead of looking for meaning in the ordinary sense, we must remain passive, submit to it and let it work on us in much the same way as we submit ourselves to music or to effects of large and intricate buildings. This approach is well illustrated by a description which Ben Nicholson, the English abstract painter, gives of a visit to the studio of Mondrian in Paris in the 1930's.

> He'd stuck up on the walls different sized rectangular pieces of board, painted a primary red, blue, yellow and white and neutral grey . . . The paintings were entirely new to me and I did not understand them on my first visit (and indeed only partially understood them on my second visit a year later). They were merely for me part of the lovely feeling generated by his thought in the room and I remember after this first visit sitting at

[1] In a previous article in *Studies* (Autumn 1959) of which this is the continuation, the question of meaning in art with special reference to modern abstract painting was raised. Some acquaintance with modern abstract painting, or with the previous article, is presumed in the discussion which follows.

> a café table on the edge of a pavement almost touching the traffic going in and out of the Gare Montparnasse and sitting there for a very long time with an astonishing feeling of quiet and repose—the thing I remembered most was the feeling of light in the room and the pauses and the silences . . . The feeling in his studio must have been not unlike the feeling in one of those hermit's caves where lions used to go to have thorns taken out of their paws.[1]

Not the way everyone feels in the presence of a Mondrian, perhaps, and certainly not the way the Action Painters affect us, but the approach is right.

The Action Painters shatter our peace, erupt into the space in which we stand and draw us into a vortex of swirling paint. If we are prepared to submit to this sort of treatment, we can find it as exhilarating as (and as less dangerous than) as a violent outburst in nature, a massive thunderstorm, a tornado. If we find it too much for our nerves, there are the quieter pleasures of the colour harmonies of Santomaso, Gorky and Nay. Any housewife with a taste in fabrics and interior decoration could appreciate the less subtle colour schemes of many abstracts were she not repelled by the forbidding thought that she was looking at art. Finally, for those who can get pleasure from watching the formation of clouds, the marbling of foam, the leisurely ascent of smoke and all the other changing forms in nature, there is endless delight to be had from the artist's handling of paint in an abstract: the emergence of half-formed shapes which dissolve and merge into one another, the arabesques and convolutions, the receding spaces and intersecting planes.

Is this sense or nonsense? It may be fun, but has it any meaning? Not the meaning we normally expect from art, perhaps, and hardly the meaning we are led to expect from the titles of the pictures. In this matter painters (or their agents) are apt to be unhelpful. A cryptic *Cathedral* (Jackson Pollock) may send the spectator in search of architectural detail and leave him surly when he has failed to find the slightest resemblance to any kind of edifice. If he were told that the canvas was meant to affect him in a way similar to that of a cathedral rich in delicate tracery, the experience might be more rewarding. Abstract art by definition is not meant to represent visual appearance. To try to make sense out of it on these terms is to look for what is not there.

There are times when it is possible to recognize resemblances (however remote) to everyday objects and the spectator in a desperate effort to make sense out of the picture at all costs and on his own terms will seize on them with a feeling of triumph. Coloured triangles by Kandinsky may remind him of yachts or fishing boats with coloured sails. But he is hopelessly wide of the mark. The fault may not be entirely his, of course.

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[1] Quoted by John Summerson in *Ben Nicholson*, Penguin Painters, 1948, p. 12.

The most celebrated case of mistaken identification is Kandinsky's *Improvisation No.* 30 which has been christened the ' Cannon ' because of two forms in the bottom right-hand corner which have a strong resemblance to cannon. The fact that the picture was painted in 1913 on the eve of war makes the interpretation attractive, particularly to psychologists. Whatever the hidden influences which caused the painter to put them there, these two ' cannon ' are, from the point of view of the painting as an abstract, unfortunate blemishes.

A much more understandable and reasonable attempt to make sense out of abstract painting is to try to find in the shapes and lines, which often resemble Chinese characters or the pictograms of some Central or South American alphabet, an esoteric sign language. Kandinsky's later hieroglyphic forms, in particular, look mysteriously meaningful. Perhaps some day an occult sect will adopt them and give them a meaning, but as they came from Kandinsky's brush they were forms and nothing more. By giving abstract paintings titles like *Agony, Equestrian, Urban, Homage to Charlemagne* (titles which are not without justification) the uninitiated spectator is encouraged to search for some deep symbolism, when all the time the painter merely wishes to draw his attention to some quality of the colouring or to indicate that the source of his abstraction was a horse's saddle. A little common sense, more humour and less seriousness might make things easier all round. At any rate, there is as little occult symbolism in abstract art as there is resemblance to everyday objects. Abstract art, unlike the art of the past, is not supposed to illustrate anything, whether appearances of things or ideas. It should have no meaning beyond itself, at least no meaning that can be easily expressed in words. If it makes sense, it is not the sort of sense we are accustomed to.

If this be true, if abstract art can most simply be described as nonsense, what right have we to call it art at all ? Or are we to conclude that in art the meaning does not matter ? Some critics, and they are by no means uninfluential, seem to think that this is precisely what we are to conclude. Not only does meaning not matter, they say, but it is positively pernicious. This curious point of view is worth examining, not only on account of the number of important people who hold it (at least implicitly) but also for a certain plausibility which it possesses.

The theory is not new. It goes back to the first World War and its great exponent then was Clive Bell. It has received more professional philosophical treatment since but has not undergone any radical revision. How much more radical can you be ? Briefly, the theory is as follows. All meaning is a reference to something beyond the thing under consideration. A word has meaning because the sound, or the sound as represented by a group of letters, refers to some thing or idea. It is

possible to consider the sound (a word in an unknown language, for example) without the sense, but once you consider the sense you are carried beyond the sound. Now if a painting has a meaning, our minds are carried away from the painting to whatever it signifies and so we cannot contemplate it in itself and for its own sake. There is a sort of aesthetic dissipation, a division of attention ; while we may still manage to give some attention to the painting we cannot give our whole attention and so the aesthetic effect is, to a greater or less extent, lost. ' Meaning ', as L. N. Beck says, ' leads away from the medium and thus reduces the aesthesis '.[1] Or, to use the well-known words of Bell : ' To appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, no familiarity with its emotions '.[3] In a word (which is not exactly original) a painting does not mean, it *is*.

On this theory not all forms of representation in art are excluded. Abstract art may be the logical but it is not the immediate conclusion. Provided the work of art is not referred to life or to history or to ideas, the aesthesis is still intact. Thus if we look on Donatello's youthful *John the Baptist* as an example of energy and zeal but without reference to any historical person (' as we might experience the serenity of a peaceful evening by a deserted sea ') all is well. Better still if the subject is a landscape or a Dutch interior or a still-life. Here the objects represented are treated for the sake of their shape, colour, volume, movement, rhythm, etc., without conveying any notable piece of information. The eye is content to rest within the picture frame and the mind is given up to peaceful contemplation. No wonder George Moore said of still-life : ' I don't care twopence about still life. Of what interest to me is it to see a picture of a bunch of grapes, a postage stamp and a pair of corduroy trousers ? ' That is the literary man speaking. Landscape, genre and still-life are painters' art forms. It is interesting to see how quickly painters turned to them as soon as patrons, lay or ecclesiastical, were no longer at hand to dictate the subjects to be painted. In these art forms, and particularly in still-life, the artist can occupy himself with the purely artistic problems of composition and pictorial construction, arranging his objects to suit himself. From this narrow technical point of view, the meaning does not matter. The step from still-life to abstract painting, from experiments with the volume, colour and shape of objects to experiments in volume, colour and shape in themselves and without reference to objects (at least to natural objects), though in every other respect enormous, is not in this respect so very great.

If this is true, if meaning in art is a distraction, then abstract art, which has no reference (seemingly) to anything outside itself, is art in

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[1] Quoted by Lucius Garvin in *Reflections on Art*, Johns Hopkins, 1958, p. 67.

[3] *Art*, p. 25.

the truest and purest sense. This is the conclusion which Malevich proclaimed to the world in 1927 in clear and unequivocal terms :

> The external appearances of nature are of no interest whatever ; the essential thing is the artist's sensibility as such, regardless of the surroundings which brought it into being. The representation of an object . . . is something which, as such, has nothing to do with art . . . All that has gone to make up the representative structure of life and art —ideas, notions, images—has been rejected by the artist so that he may give his undivided attention to pure sensibility.[1]

Do these theorists, it may be asked, wish to say that art at its highest is utterly meaningless and the sheerest nonsense ? They would hardly go as far as that. Only an infuriated academician would assert that there was no difference between abstract painting and the meaningless daubs of very small children and chimpanzees. Besides, the very theorists who decry and reject meaning in art speak (or used to speak) of what they called ' significant form '. Unless language has been distorted out of all proportion, significant form must in some way be meaningful. How can a thing which has no meaning be meaningful ?

We must distinguish here between what might be called external and internal meaning. The fact that the work as a whole has no meaning, that it does not refer to anything outside itself, does not prevent it from having meaning within itself, that is, from having a meaningful arrangement of parts. While the colours, lines and shapes in a painting may not be related to anything we meet with in ordinary experience, nor to any idea, they are related among themselves by balance, rhythm, contrast, harmony, etc. Each has its place and its function in the picture ; this is its meaning, its *raison d'être.* This can be most easily demonstrated in the geometrical abstracts. It can be demonstrated to a certain extent even in the more amorphous abstracts by the simple expedient of covering one part of the painting ; the rest will then seem to fall apart and go to pieces. This kind of meaning, this interrelationship of parts is fundamental to all art. At times (for example during the classical periods of Greek and Renaissance art) it can become highly mathematical and rational. At other times it has been less rational and can only be appreciated by patient application. Modern painting, whether abstract or figurative, tends to be rather irrational in construction (this has been so since the days of Tintoretto) and will not as a rule, especially if it is abstract, become intelligible at first sight. But there is no reason for taking fright or losing heart on that account. The formal structure of an abstract is not different in kind from the patterns of light and shade made by the sun shining through leaves or the rhythm of furrows curving

[1] *Die Gegenstandlose Welt* (The Non-representational World) quoted in *A Dictionary of Abstract Art,* London, 1959, p. 97.

over a hill or a well-arranged bowl of flowers. It is more complicated ; that is all.

Is this all the significance we can allow to art ? If so, it is hard to see how art has attained the exalted position it holds among civilized peoples. Rudolf Arnheim has some devastating things to say about those who wish to reduce art to a matter of formal relationships and nothing more :

> If the layman is told that art deals with the presentation of balance or harmony, he ought to conclude, with surprise, that apparently the celebrated craft of the artist is concerned with nothing better than the modest satisfaction experienced by a housemaid who arranges knicknacks on the mantlepiece in a symmetrical order. And when a lecturer endeavours to explain the *raison d'être* of a painting by showing in detail how the colours, masses, and directions balance each other, the layman should be expected to assume that, for reasons of their own, artists have expanded the game of the housemaid into a tricky trade.[1]

In point of fact, even the most extreme protagonists of the nonsense theory of art would admit that there is more in it than clever design and skill in solving difficult problems of formal structure. They would agree with Arnheim that the formal structure does not exist for its own sake but for something else. That something is feeling. The purpose of form is to express or communicate or arouse a certain feeling peculiar to each work of art. Even Malevich admits that : ' the essential thing is feeling '. This may be what Clive Bell means by significant form ; a term he never clearly defined, but it is undoubtedly connected with emotion and its function is to convey emotion. He calls the emotion ' aesthetic emotion ' and we are told that it differs from the ordinary emotions of life because it is produced by significant form. But making due allowance for ae apparent vicious circle, one can still see a certain truth in Bell's contention that there is something unique in the emotions aroused by a work of art. Unlike the emotions of life, aesthetic emotions do not lead to action nor are they directly related to action. We distinguish genuine art from its counterfeit by this very fact. The emotions derived from true art are detached, ordered and under the control of reason ; the emotions aroused by sentimental or pornographic literature, for example, lead to action of some kind, in this case to tears or to immoral desires. But, for all that, the emotions of art and the emotions of life do not differ in kind. Painters themselves would be the first to admit this. To take the abstract painters alone, Mondrian speaks quite simply about the repose and vitality of nature as expressed in his horizontals

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[1] *Art and Visual Perception,* London, 1956, p. 22.

and verticals, and Kandinsky about the sad or cheerful effects of colour.[1]

Once you admit the emotions of life into art, you not only raise it above mere trickery but you give it a significance which goes beyond the work itself. Even ' the serenity of a peaceful evening by a deserted sea ' has a meaning beyond what is immediately before the eye. It is for just this reason that we are content to contemplate it. It speaks to us of passion spent and strife resolved and a thousand things which defy expression in words. These other meanings do not take from our enjoyment nor distract us from our contemplation. On the contrary, they form the very stuff of it, they are the cause and reason for it.

Can emotion be called meaning ? It can, but it is not meaning in the ordinary sense of the word. When we ordinarily talk about meaning, we speak of ideas or factual information or propositions—anything, in fact, which can be expressed in reasonably clear concepts. But when we talk about the meaning conveyed by feelings, we are not talking about this clear and explicit meaning. We are talking about a meaning which is conveyed only by causing another person to share the sort of experience which we ourselves have gone through. We use this type of meaning frequently in ordinary life without adverting to it. It is at the basis of metaphor. When we say that we are walking on air, we do not wish to convey a piece of scientifically accurate information but rather to describe our emotional experience in terms of another imaginative and exaggerated emotional experience.

The emotional or affective meaning of things plays a far larger part in life than most people suspect. Everything has its emotional or affective aspect. Places, people, institutions, ideas, events, all move us in their own particular way. It is the function of art to gather together, so to speak, to organize and order these meanings, in the same way as it is the function of philosophy, science, history, etc., to organize and classify and clarify our ideas and factual information about ourselves and about the world around us. The painter does this by using the affective qualities of his materials : colours, volume, shape, the texture of paint, the images he can produce. Thus in his *Lamentation* Giotto conveyed the depth of emotional significance of the incident of the taking down of Our Lord's Body from the Cross. He did it by means of stooping figures heavy with sorrow, the descending line of a hill, an irregular, serrated row of hovering angles—the very expression of the agitation of grief. But since it was a grief relieved by hope, this too is suggested by figures which stand upright or by a tree which stretches its trunk and branches upwards into the sky.

[1] Emotion is not here confined to its more violent manifestations in expressionistic or romantic art but includes the emotional or affective quality which is to be found in all art. Even so detached and seemingly unemotional a painter as Piero della Francesca suffuses his pictures with a sense of stillness and serenity or of latent power.

It is difficult to find a suitable word for this type of meaning. ' Quasi-meaning ' has been suggested, and in *The Meaning of Meaning* Ogden and Richards speak of ' affective ' as opposed to ' symbolic ' meaning.[1] They call affective meaning ' virtual ' knowledge and add rather unkindly ' any state of mind in which anyone takes a great interest is very likely to be called " knowledge ", because no other word in psychology has such emotive virtue '[2]—but, then, they are logicians. However, following Susanne Langer and others, it has become popular to speak of affective or emotional meaning also as symbolic. This is unfortunate, but since there is some justification for it, the confusion is unavoidable. One must bear in mind, therefore, that when Ogden and Richards say that affective meaning is not symbolic they are saying that it is conveyed through feeling and not by conventional symbols with a clear and definite meaning. On the other hand when others say that it is symbolic, they mean that it suggests something beyond itself. Thus the feelings aroused by a morning in spring will suggest similar feelings aroused by youth, hope, the beginning of things, resurrection, etc., and to that extent symbolize them, but you could not make out a catalogue of the precise things which a spring morning stands for or suggests, as you can list the different meanings of the word ' spring '.

But to return to the meaning of abstract painting.

We have seen that the meaning proper to art (the ' quasi-meaning ', if you like) is affective and that it is the function of art to express, organize and clarify by means of its formal structure, the emotional significance of things. Abstract art does this, if it does nothing else. When an Action Painter hurls his paint onto the canvas or when Mondrian draws his carefully balanced geometrical shapes, the aim in both cases is to convey emotion, and in this they are doing no less than Giotto in the *Lamentation* (though in other respects they may be doing very much less). The difference between Giotto's method of conveying emotion and that of the abstract painter is that the former works through images and representations of objects and the abstract painter relies on the direct impact of his materials. Thus he achieves a more direct, immediate and intense effect—or so he hopes. The effect, he claims, is akin to the

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[1] The distinction between affective and symbolic meanings (and their close interrelationship) might be illustrated from such familiar things as traffic lights. The amber light does not of itself suggest the idea that one should prepare to stop. It is given that meaning by convention. It is a purely symbolic meaning ; as far as colours go, purple, grey, white, pale blue might have done as well. Red, on the other hand, is an affectively exciting and arresting colour. It might suggest danger even without being given this meaning. Green has not the affective meaning of permission to proceed ; this meaning had to be given to it and is symbolic. But there is something affectively restful and reassuring about green which makes its symbolic meaning affectively satisfying.

[2] *The Meaning of Meaning*, London, 1930, p. 157. They make amends when they say : ' to deny that " virtual knowledge " is in the symbolic sense knowledge is in no way derogatory to the state called by that name '.

immediate emotional effect of music or architecture. This has been the claim of abstract painters from the beginning. Kandinsky was tireless in his insistence on the musical quality of abstract art, and Mondrian called his last canvases Boogie-Woogie.[1] We must admit a certain element of truth in this claim. There can be no doubt that abstract qualities of a painting, lines, colours, volumes and the texture of paint itself have strong emotional power. The few black lines which surround and imprison Rouault's outcasts are more expressive of the weight and hopelessness of human misery than any amount of detail of rags and haggard faces. It is also true that the more a painter simplifies his subject, abstracts from detail and relies on materials, the more expressive and moving his picture will be. Logically one might expect that the most expressive of all would be the total abstract, the painting with no distracting detail whatever, no representational object at all. Logically, perhaps, it should work out that way, but in fact it doesn't.[2]

One thing that has been overlooked is that feeling as such does not exist. It must always be feeling about something. The extraordinary depth of feeling which Rembrandt manages to communicate in his etchings of the Crucifixion is conveyed by the most abstract of means—the cross-hatching of lines, deep shadows, and faintly outlined figures. Remove the figures, and the feeling goes with them. You are left with lines and areas of black ink which of themselves do not convey a sense of deep and mysterious tragedy. Again, a splash of red on a canvas may strike the eye with an impact similar to the sound of a piercing cry of anguish, and if this is pointed out we may see the resemblance, but a red splash is not in itself the visual equivalent of anguish and the flippant may be pardoned for asking who spilt the ketchup. If we are to receive the full emotional force of a painting it must be associated however remotely, with something. We need clues.

This conclusion is borne out by experiments in psychology. In the Rorschach projection tests, designed to test personality traits, the candidate is presented with a series of irregularly shaped blots which he is to interpret according to his own experiences and feelings. Because these blots have no recognizable shape, they will arouse different

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[1] A discussion of the relationship between music and abstract art is beyond the scope of this article. It might be pointed out, however, that : (*a*) visual perception is more intimately connected with natural objects than is hearing ; we have not to do violence to our normal psychological processes in order to apprehend sounds detached from a source in nature as we have to in contemplating colours and shapes without forming them into objects ; (*b*) painting is by nature static ; it can only indirectly suggest movement and rhythm ; whereas music, being a succession of sounds, naturally contains movement and rhythm, and through them can directly arouse our emotions. It is as difficult for music to evoke images as for painting to prescind from them or arouse feelings without them.

[2] Logic is a bad guide in art. In his pursuit of pure sensibility Malevich was led to paint a white square on a white ground. But logic should not have stopped there. Why not a white ground on a white ground ? or a painting without colour or ground, which Kandinsky in a moment of aberration once envisaged ?

emotions in different individuals. In this respect they resemble abstract paintings and point to their fatal ambiguity. It is often almost anybody's guess what the emotional content of an abstract is meant to be. There is no reason to doubt that the painter himself was strongly moved, nor is there any doubt that the painting will arouse some response in the spectator. But is it the response the painter wished to communicate? Without some medium of communication, something with which the emotion may be conveyed, there is every reason for suspecting that it is not.

Two possible means of communication lie open to the painter who wishes to avoid all reference to representational objects. One is to renounce his autonomy as a picture-maker and go over to decoration. In this way his abstracts will share in the emotional life of a building and enhance it. Already stained-glass workers have done this with very satisfactory results, but so far no major paintings on the grand scale have been done. When and if this should happen, the results might well be magnificent. Not since the days of the Baroque has painting contributed to architecture as an integral part of its effect. Abstract art would have the advantage over figurative mural decoration that the walls (and ceilings) would not be covered by a race of grossly inflated giants.

The second possibility open to the artist is to communicate his feeling for his *materials* and nothing more. The paint itself, the colour, texture, the suggestion of space and volume, lines and geometrical shapes, these alone become the subject matter, the thing about which he feels. This is in fact what most abstract painters at the present moment are doing. But it has two disadvantages. Firstly, the number of people who can appreciate it is necessarily small. An artist may have a strongly developed feeling for his materials. The smoothness of paint may be for him more soft and suave than cream, a line may have more grace than a drooping flower or a waterfall, a volume may have more latent power and grandeur than a mountain range, but unless the spectator is experienced in the ways of painters he will not appreciate all this. The whole nature of visual perception inclines us to look for images in things, in clouds, for instance, or in the fire, and it requires considerable training to look at the materials of painting for their own sake and without looking for images in them. Of course, anyone who really appreciates figurative painting and does not look at it merely for the things it represents or the story it tells, should have no difficulty in appreciating the affective qualities of materials as such. But how many are there who do? Abstract painting is in a sense the acid test.

This first disadvantage, serious though it is, can be overcome by time and training. But the second disadvantage is more fundamental. By confining himself to the affective qualities of his materials the artist

has drastically limited his range of expression. Granted that we can learn to appreciate the affective qualities of paint in a way analogous to our appreciation of an evening by a deserted sea or a sky heavy with rain and storm, and granted, too, that these abstract canvases may become so much part of our lives that they acquire the sort of symbolic value which we give to a sunset or other event in nature, their interest can never have the breadth and vastness of nature. The materials of painting, rich and varied though they are, cannot be compared with the richness of nature. The feelings which the materials arouse may be, and often are, expressed with great intensity. These abstract paintings may have great artistic or expressive value (using the word artistic here to mean the ability to find apt visual equivalents for feeling). But they have not great absolute value. Absolutely speaking, the materials of the painter's craft are of far less interest or importance than almost any subject a figurative painter might care to represent. It is possible to treat a sublime subject in an artistically inept way, as it is possible to handle materials with artistic mastery, but all things being equal, the sublime subject expressed with suitable artistic ability is of absolutely higher value than the masterly handling of materials.

We are now in a position to expose the mistake in the nonsense theory of art. It is not true that meaning is irrelevant to art, even meaning as we ordinarily understand it. A painting which tells a story or illustrates an idea is not necessarily artistically inferior to one which does not (and absolutely speaking it is probably far superior). The reason is that a painting which tells a story does so in a different way from a history book. A painting tells a story in terms of the story's affective qualities which are communicated through the affective qualities of paint. Thus Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* gives us the affective significance of the Genesis story in terms of energy and passivity and movement, which are conveyed by the formal structure, the relationship of lines and masses, and the arrangement and pose of the human body. The meaning of the scene cannot be separated from the formal structure, because it is only as a means of illustrating the creative act of God that the formal structure itself is intelligible. The narrative meaning and any other meaning which an artist incorporates into his work are, as Lucius Garvin says, ' aesthetic just to the extent that they are treated aesthetically '.

Judged by this absolute scale of values abstract art, however meaningful (or quasi-meaningful) aesthetically, is not of great worth. And yet it will be objected, there are some abstract paintings (the early work of Kandinsky or some of Pollock) which are worthy of serious consideration. That cannot be denied. But, then, if the truth were told, these are not abstracts in the strict or doctrinaire sense of the word. They are, however disguisedly, representational (using the word representa-

tional in a broader sense than figurative). 'There is no abstract art', Picasso once said. This may be taken to mean that there can be no art of lasting value which does not represent something, even if it be the most abstract idea. No intelligent painter can give himself over to mere experimentation with the emotive qualities of his craft. He must wish to express (affectively, of course) some idea, and find some visual equivalent for his own attitude to the world and the great truths of our existence. In every age artists will come forward to restate these unchangeable truths in terms of the vision of the age. The abstract painters have been no exceptions.

At the beginning of the century, when abstract art came into being, new scientific and philosophical ideas were also coming into vogue. It was not just that the horizons of knowledge were being broadened by discoveries in astronomy, archaeology, geology, physics, psychology and the other sciences. Our whole attitude and way of thinking about the world was changing. The concept of space had changed, and other new ideas had been put forward : indefinite location, the constant mutability and interpenetrability of forms, etc. 'The universe', as Sir James Jeans wrote, 'begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine.' These ideas are stimuli to the artist. Consciously or unconsciously, he will try to come to terms with them imaginatively. The artist's canvas has become a field of force where waves of matter, lines of tension and strain, trajectories and vectors, emerging forms and disintegrating nebulae take transitory shape, form patterns, interpenetrate and disappear in a sort of endless, complex and infinitely varied dance.

Abstract painters have even been influenced by the findings of science itself ; the photographs of the tracks of gamma rays, stellar nebulae, biological forms. The artists have not attempted to reproduce these, but they have used them to express the abstract ideas about the universe which are so baffling and yet so stimulating. Each painter will have his own preoccupation. With Kandinsky it was growth and change, with Pollock 'the effort of dynamic matter to overcome chaos and attain determinate form', with Sonderborg it is speed and movement, and so on.

What are we to say of those painters who claim to express the hidden depth of the unconscious ? Once again, the problem of communication arises. Just as you cannot have feeling without the thing which causes the feeling, so you cannot express the unconscious except in terms of the objects of consciousness. As Rudolf Arnheim puts it :

> The distinction between the outer and inner world is artificial. The human mind receives shapes and interprets its images of the outer world with all its conscious and unconscious powers, and the realm of the unconscious could never enter our experience without the reflection of perceivable things.[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 376.

This should be so obvious as to be hardly worth stating. Even granted that abstract painters manage to express something of their unconscious state of mind, what is the result ? Very little indeed. What, after all, do we learn from the brush strokes of the great masters ? Something personal, to be sure, but in terms of positive knowledge, not much. We learn to distinguish one master from another ; we get to know his feeling for the objects he paints and for his materials. That is all. From the abstract painters we learn even less ; for, as has just been said, it is in portraying perceptible objects that the personal qualities, the style, of the painter is revealed, and the abstract painter does not paint objects.

As to the further question whether self-revelation, such as it is, is more real because closer to the mainspring of creativity than the representation of objects or the illustration of ideas, nothing can be said here. It is a philosophical and not an artistic question.

In answer, therefore, to the general question posed at the beginning of these articles : does meaning matter in art ? we can say, yes, emphatically it does. But we must distinguish between the meanings expressible in clear and distinct terms (symbolic meaning) and meaning which must be felt to be understood (affective meaning). The latter belongs properly to art and must be there, and the more intensely this meaning is expressed, the greater the artistic value of the work. The other meaning can be there, too, provided it is translated into terms of affective meaning ; for all meaning can be experienced through feeling, though not all feeling can be clearly expressed. And according to the depth of symbolic meaning and the profundity of the ideas aesthetically expressed, will the absolute value of the work be judged.

On these principles, the absolute value of abstract art, with some notable exceptions, has so far not been very great. The artistic value, however, is often considerable, and there is one outstanding mark in its favour ; it has widened the technical possibilities of painting and given the painter a mastery over his materials and a sense of their affective or expressive possibilities which is invaluable.

The ideal situation exists when a man like Paul Klee strikes a balance between imagery and abstraction—and, incidentally, Klee with his use of images has done far more to explore the unconscious than the abstract expressionists. How far this balance is upset by such theories as the nonsense theory of art would be hard to say. Abstract art seems as much a response to some inner necessity of contemporary artists as to the promptings of the pundits.[1]

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[1] There seems to be an extrinsic necessity too. A friend, just returned from America, writes that the urban, or rather suburban, manner of life over there makes it necessary for the painter to administer violent shocks if he is to make any impression on the public.

For the general public, abstract art must remain for some time to come the sort of nonsense described at the beginning of the article. But it is not sheer nonsense ; it is in fact quasi-sense, the sense which is basic to all art. It may be chastening to know that an inability to appreciate abstract art probably indicates an inability to appreciate other forms of art as they should be appreciated.[1] But it is also encouraging to know that appreciation can come with time and experience. In the meantime—patience : the artist is trying to say something, even if his voice is sometimes rather low.

[1] The absence of ' sense ' as we ordinarily understand it makes the task of the critic of modern abstract painting exceedingly difficult. Emotions defy exact analysis and definition, and the only way the critic can convey his feelings for a painting (as opposed to merely recording the fact that he has them) is in terms of an analogous experience : by writing a poem, perhaps, or singing a song, or by doing a little dance.

Book Reviews

ART

REFLECTIONS ON ART. A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers. Edited by Susanne Langer. Baltimore : The Johns Hopkins Press. (London : Oxford University Press). 1958. xviii and 364 pp. 52s.

Art belongs to that little band of subjects on which everyone feels he has a right to speak. He can do so with impunity because it is exceedingly difficult to be proved wrong. It is not just that allowance must be made for the variety of taste but that even where there is agreement on the merits of a work of art, it is not always possible to agree on the correct way of talking about them. And so, if it is true that *de gustibus non est disputandum*, there is plenty of room for argument about the way to argue about them.

Attempts to remedy the situation by constructing elaborate systems of aesthetics have not been notably successful nor even potentially useful. More profitable work has been done on limited questions and problems. In the book under review we have the fruit of this work over the last half-century in the form of twenty-six articles from twenty periodicals (American, English, French and German) by such writers (to name only the best known) as Malraux, Marcel, Coomaraswawy, de Selincourt and Charles Morgan. The subjects cover : general aesthetics, the visual arts, music, poetry, drama and ballet. The selection has been made by Susanne Langer with generous help from the Johns Hopkins University.

Susanne Langer has herself made a notable contribution to the theory of art in *Feeling and Form* (1953) and *The Problem of Art* (1957). To this collection, however, she contributes nothing more than a helpful introduction. Her selection has been in no way partisan. Though she admits that the articles have helped to form her own ideas, she does not agree with all they contain (nor does the reviewer). As she rightly remarks, once a problem has been pointed up it is ripe for solution. Even if the original solution is not satisfactory, the hardest work is done ; one further idea (or in her own case one further formula) will solve it. This is particularly true of what is perhaps the central question of the book, the problem of artistic expression and emotion, on which articles by Otto Baensch, L. A. Reid, V. C. Aldrich and Lucius Garvin bear. It is fascinating to watch these scholars working towards a common and satisfactory solution.

One of the virtues which the editor draws attention to in her authors is the absence of controversy. ' They refer to one another without polemical intent and seem to belong to the same general advance without any common creed or school.' They exemplify her idea of fruitful inquiry. ' A philosophical theory is not called on to furnish " irrefutable proofs," but concepts that give rise to insight and discovery . . . One cannot prove the excellence of a concept, even if it be logically impeccable, except pragmatically, by operating with it

successfully.' Practitioners in other philosophical disciplines may demur, but the truth of what she says is abundantly clear in aesthetics.

This book is for the use of scholars and serious students of art. Familiarity with the ideas contained in it is essential for anyone who wishes to understand or speak seriously about the subject. It is not, however, a survey of current (and often futile) theories ; one must go elsewhere for that. It is practically indispensable to anyone living in this country since only two of the twenty periodicals from which the articles were taken are available in our public libraries. This is understandable ; the number of people interested in aesthetics must be small. Yet, if we are to believe the editor of this book, aesthetics is the coming thing. Just as the theory of knowledge and of science have been the preoccupations of post-medieval philosophy, so art is rapidly becoming a central subject of interest to modern philosophers. Modern art in particular has raised a number of very interesting and tricky problems which have hardly yet been fully opened up. ' One of the new sources of philosophical thinking is the world-old phenomenon of art. It is a new source because it is just being tapped by modern philosophers. But, like most long-sealed springs, it is strong. Basic philosophical problems that take rise from our reflections on art develop fast and throw light especially on the somewhat stalemated concepts of psychology and the still-wavering, vague or else prematurely narrow concepts of anthropology.'

CYRIL BARRETT

HISTORY

THE ORIGINS OF RUSSIA. By George Vernadsky. Oxford University Press. 1959. Pp. xi, 354. 35s.

Professor Vernadsky is one of the greatest living scholars on the history of medieval Russia ; it is indeed ironic that his books should have been first published outside his native country and in English. However, the irony has its providential aspect. Had Professor Vernadsky been writing in the Soviet Union, his work would inevitably have been less scholarly and less scientific because of the necessity to fall in line with the canons of Marxist historical orthodoxy.

But that unhappy contingency did not arise, and instead we have in the volume under review a massive piece of historical scholarship. From the earliest recorded scraps of information about the Russian land and its peoples down to the adoption of Christianity by the Kievan princes Professor Vernadsky constructs a narrative and interpretation of events which will be indispensable for any serious student of Russia. It would be all too easy for a writer on Russia's ' Dark Ages ' to be technical, obscure and dull. Technical Professor Vernadsky is in the best sense, and he certainly deals with many obscure problems ; but to at least one reader his discussion made more lively and stimulating reading than many another professedly ' lighter ' work.

The main thesis of the book is that the Eastern Slavs (who became known as ' Russes,' though this was at first the name of only one of their tribes) came

originally not from the Pripet Marshes or the regions of Poland and the Western Ukraine but from much further east—in fact from the Indo-European homeland in the steppe country of Central Asia. They were thus, as Professor Vernadsky would argue, in constant contact with the migrations and interminglings of peoples, cultures and ideas which were the permanent features of these regions from ancient to modern times. Vernadsky believes that there is substantial evidence to support this belief : ' The deep affinity of the culture of the early Slavs with that of Indo-Aryan, Alanic and Turkish peoples is evidenced by many traits in the folk-lore, art and religion of the Slavs' (p. 4). It would be out of place in this review to attempt to list Vernadsky's evidence in detail. It ranges from carols and pancakes to the pentatonic musical scale but the reader is advised to sample this fascinating piece of historical detective work for himself.

The Slav inhabitants of what is now Russia seem to have been subjected to successive waves of conquest by more active and efficient warrior minorities such as the Alans, Goths, Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Khazars, Magyars, Turks and Norsemen. Some of these, such as the Magyars, Bulgars and Goths were merely temporary sojourners on their way westward. Others such as the Norsemen stayed to give the Slavs the leadership which they apparently could not provide for themselves. The Alans should be of particular interest to Irish readers, for it seems that some of them must have made their way to the Celtic west of Europe, as the evidence of geographical and personal names reveals. The names ' Ros ' or ' Ross ' (closely related to ' Rus ') and ' Allan ' are used in Ulster as early as the fourth century A.D., though the correct derivation of the words is not yet certain. Settlements of Alans who were veteran ' Roman ' legionaries are known to have existed in Lancashire, where the name ' Allan ' has been common since medieval times ; it is surely no coincidence that the famous Cardinal Allen of recusant days should have hailed from a locality called Rossall. It seems that there must be more contacts than most of us suspect between old Irish and old Russian history.

The first occasion on which the Russians ventured to assert their independence from any overlord seems to have been the eighth century A.D., which saw the establishment of the ' kaganate,' about which Moslem writers are our chief sources of information. The site of the capital of the kaganate is not known for certain, but Vernadsky stakes out a plausible claim for Tmutorokan in the Crimean region. The famous ' Calling of the Varangians ' (the invitation to the Norsemen under Rurik related in the twelfth century *Chronography*) is interpreted by Vernadsky as a gradual process starting from northern Russia and ending in the shifting of power to the south, where Kiev, originally a Magyar settlement, became the centre of a new all-Russian principality which superseded the Tmutorokan kaganate. The trend of argument here is strikingly similar to the ' gradualist ' interpretation, growingly favoured in recent years, of the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England. Rurik is identified by Vernadsky with Roric of Jutland, who figures in ninth century Western history as *fel Christianitatis*, ' the gall of Christendom.'

Byzantine civilization exerted a tremendous attraction on the early Russians and after originally trying to possess themselves of its riches by force

the Russians entered the Byzantine cultural heritage by submission to Christianity. In his sixth chapter Vernadsky gives an interesting summary of the conversion of other Slavonic nations as well as of Russia by Byzantine missionaries. The activities of Sts Cyril and Methodius, those bridges between Rome and Constantinople, are particularly well described.

Vladimir of Kiev, the Constantine of Russia, seems like his prototype to have been a strangely ambiguous figure. Originally a man of barbarian passions (in his pagan days he even practised human sacrifice), he ended as a just and charitable Christian ruler, building churches, promoting education and dispensing charity towards the poor. This dualism is reflected in the strikingly diverse ways in which the Church chronicles and histories on the one hand and epic and folk-lore sources on the other present him. To the former he is ' St Vladimir ' (the Russian Church canonized him in 1263) ; to the latter he is ' Vladimir the Ardent Sun ', about whom legends clustered. The Mithraistic connections of old Russian paganism are well illustrated by Vladimir's nomenclature : ' Vladimir's name means ' the Ruling Mithra.' In Russian folk-lore Vladimir is called ' the Ardent Sun ' (*Krasnoe Solntse*), which is a Mithraic epithet ' (p. 291).

It was long after Vladimir's time before Christianity took root among the Russians outside the relatively few towns. Vernadsky suggests that this was because of the absence of any large-scale organization of parishes such as existed in Western Europe. He estimates that it was as late as the sixteenth century before the vast mass of rural peasantry was more than nominally Christian.

The book gives due attention to what can be known about the social and economic life of Russia in these early times. By contrast with the West, medieval Russian society cannot be described as feudal, for there was no serf class ; there certainly were slaves but down to the sixteenth century the average Russian peasant was a free man.

The only criticisms which this reviewer is competent to level against Professor Vernadsky's volume are from the standpoint of a general reader. It seems a pity that at times the author does not take more mercy on his readers by filling out his picture with a certain amount of background explanation, particularly of a geographical nature. One wishes for the same reason that the Clarendon Press, which has published the book with its usual distinction, had encouraged the author to include one or more maps. It is to be hoped that those who know little but wish to know more about Professor Vernadsky's subject will not allow the lack of this elementary assistance to deter them from attempting this excellent book.

JOHN B. MORRALL

THE COUNCIL OF FLORENCE. By Joseph Gill. Cambridge University Press. 1959. Pp. xviii+453. 47s. 6d.

A MODERN history of the Council of Ferrara-Florence-Lateran has long been awaited and how well Father Gill's book fills that need ! Apart from the more obvious bearing of the Council of Florence on the relations between

the Greek and Latin Churches, it is perhaps more durably important as giving the answer to the Council of Basel, and spelling the end of the Conciliar movement in the West. And towards that lasting result, the Union with the Greeks, short-lived though it was, contributed no little weight. And yet, from another aspect, as Father Gill challengingly remarks in the first sentence of his introduction: 'The Council of Florence made the Reformation inevitable'. 'Reform in Head and Members', the watch-word of the Conciliarists, was badly needed. Yet, Florence passed no decrees of Reform; and even Basel did not dare touch the bishops, though it was strong for Reform —and submission—of the Head. The complicated political situation of Italy, the weakness of the Papacy, even in the Papal States and in Rome itself, the challenge of Basel, which involved the neutral attitude of France and Germany, the mutual hostility of England and France, the designs of Aragon on the Kingdom of Naples, the war with the Turks which occupied Hungarians and Poles—these and other factors rendered all but a piecemeal approach to Reform impracticable. The time was not ripe for Reform. But, when the next Council met the best part of a hundred years later, revolt was on the point of breaking out.

This is the tragedy of Florence. And, in the matter of Union with the Greeks, the victory of Murad at Varna in 1444 spelled the end of the Byzantine Empire, and, with the capture of Constantinople in 1453, the anti-unionist party in the Eastern Church soon made an end of Union.

However, the dogmatic decisions of the Council of Florence endured, and the Reunion Decree was the model of subsequent reunion with the Ruthenians (1595–6) and with the Rumanians (1700). In fact, perhaps the most striking commentary on the Council's work comes from the successful negotiations for reunion concluded with the Copts and Abyssinians, the Armenians and the Jacobites, the Chaldaeans and the dissident Maronites in the last months of the Council's existence in Rome.

Father Gill is eminently qualified to write this book because of his long acquaintance with the sources of late Byzantine history, and, in particular, because of his part in producing the critical edition of the Acta of Florence. His disentangling of the relative value of the various sources is one of the most fascinating things in the book. After an introductory section, which gives an outline of the relations between the Greek and Latin Churches, there are two excellent chapters tracing the various negotiations which Pope Martin V initiated with the Greeks, and which his successor, Pope Eugenius IV, continued, in spite of his difficulties with the Council of Basel. Indeed, these negotiations soon resolved themselves into a competition for the support of the Greeks between Pope and Council. The Greeks undoubtedly helped the Pope's cause by their clear statement that they had always recognized the Pope as the head of the Latin Church, but in the end, it was the arrival of the Pope's ships in Constantinople before those of the Council, which directed the course of events.

Drama is not lacking, it need scarcely be said, to the background of the Council of Florence, as all men were conscious of the impending tragedy. Scholarius, in Italy one of the stoutest defenders of Union, who later through rancour and under the influence of Mark of Ephesus, became the focus of

anti-unionist activity, and who finally became the first oecumenical Patriarch to be invested by the Sultan, was convinced that the end of the world was at hand. The interest in things Greek and the search for manuscripts which marked the period of the Council in Italy, remind us that the Council was held in the Florence of Fra Angelico. And the heroic activities of the Franciscan missioners and of Isodore of Kiev brighten the dark days of the end.

And yet, in spite of the enormous interest of the setting and of the personalities involved, Father Gill manages to make the crucial dogmatic debates on the Addition to the Creed, and the theology of the ' Filioque ', the central theme in his book. There are few theologians who will not admire the learning of Cardinal Cesarini and of the Dominican Provincial of Lombardy, Giovanni de Montenero, and fewer still who will not benefit from a reading of these chapters, so beautifully clear, in spite of the difficult subject matter.

The reasons for the failure of the work of Union, the later charges of the anti-unionists, all this is discussed at length in a sober, impartial style which is most impressive. Death plays its part, too. The death of Patriarch Joseph robbed the Unionists of a force sufficient to counter the influence of Mark of Ephesus, The death of the Emperor's wife distracted him from the work of promulgating the Union, and securing its acceptance. If there is a villain in the book, it is assuredly Mark of Ephesus, although he was perfectly sincere. And, if there is a hero, Pope Eugenius IV surely deserves the title, not merely for his Council, which involved such great expense and difficulty, but also for his implementing to the best of his ability his promise of a Crusade. Help for Constantinople was undoubtedly one of the main factors in persuading the Greeks to set about considering dogmatic questions, and, when this hope was finally frustrated, the anti-unionist forces were soon able to harness the anti-Latin prejudice of centuries. Father Gill seems to attribute the ultimate failure in the matter of reunion above all to the neglect of preaching and explaining the work of Florence to those who were most dominated by ignorant prejudice.

This is a magnificent book, in its impartial scholarship, in its clarity, and in its summing up of the various motives which influenced the protagonists on both sides.

PATRICK O'CONNELL

STRAFFORD IN IRELAND. By Hugh F. Kearney. Manchester University Press. 1959. Pp. 294. 35s.

The verdict of English historians on Strafford's viceroyalty in Ireland has been, as Dr Kearney points out, almost uniformly adulatory, that he was the first, and possibly the last ruler with the single-minded aim of bringing justice to a long-mistreated land, that that aim was, in the words of Miss C. V. Wedgwood, whose work on Strafford has had perhaps the widest currency, ' to strike through the corruption of age-old misgovernment and join hands with all that was best in the Irish nation, of what race or religion soever.' Nevertheless, as Dr. Kearney also notes, Irish historians have on the whole criticized Strafford for being despotic, unimaginative and cruel in his

methods of government, and their verdict certainly seems to have the advantage of providing some reasonable explanation of the disastrous end to his term of office. Yet their verdict has gone almost unheard, partly no doubt because of the wider attention the English historians naturally commanded, but also because the Irish verdict has never been completely and critically worked out. Dr Kearney presents us here with a full and critical study of Strafford's Irish viceroyalty, and he leaves very little doubt that the verdict against Strafford is substantially correct.

Stafford's reputation started with the great advantage that almost all the immediately relevant documentation presented the ' official ' side of the case—it could be described without very much exaggeration as Strafford's verdict on himself. The opening of the Strafford archives from Wentworth Woodhouse ten years ago did little or nothing to control this lack of balance in the material—in fact it rather accentuated it. Dr. Kearney, while making full use of the Strafford material, has ranged very widely in his attempt to assess the viewpoint of the other interests represented in the Irish scene, in a way which is reminiscent of work which has been done recently for the same period in England, for example in Brunton and Pennington, *Members of the Long Parliament.* This kind of work has to be very painstaking and detailed, all the more so because in Ireland the tangle of interests was even more complicated than in England, and the sources available are far more scanty and have been much less worked over. Very frequently the author has to be content with surmises and half-proved hypotheses, but he has handled his difficult material skilfully and there can be little real doubt of his conclusions.

These conclusions confirm what he has called the verdict of Irish historians, and in some places make it even more damning. For instance, in Philip Wilson's essay, which though over fifty years old was perhaps the safest ground which existed, while Strafford's mishandling of the problems of government was duly pointed out, he was at least given credit for initiating and carrying through a policy of his own. After Dr Kearney's study, it seems that he can no longer claim that credit, not even in economic matters, in which up to this it had been agreed that he had made remarkable innovations. The verdict now, it seems, must be that Strafford had no real economic policy at all, and that instead of seeing him as imposing justice on the great magnates who ran Ireland for their own gain it must be admitted that he did not differ from them very noticeably. The real novelty of his administration, Dr Kearney concludes, is that it was the first attempt at direct colonial administration of the whole island. His methods were so unfortunate that he ended by alienating the most diverse interests in the country.

The only place in which I might feel competent in offering detailed criticism is in the religious history of the period, especially the Catholic counter-reformation. Dr. Kearney makes a point very well worth making in stressing the vitality and importance of this movement, and a point equally well worth making, I am afraid, in lamenting the absence of any really satisfactory study of it. However, we may be approaching the point where such a study will become possible, with the publication of the *Wadding Papers* and the progress in exploring the Roman archives, notably those of Propaganda and the Barberini and Borghese collections in the Vatican.

From the not inconsiderable body of material at present available, I think a few criticisms might be urged. For instance, the studies published in the tercentenary volume, *Father Luke Wadding*, should lead to some qualification of the statement that Wadding's political sympathies lay with Spain and the Old Irish. I feel too that the statement of Bishop Comerford, notoriously a complainer, cannot be really used to support the view that there were too many Catholic clergy in the country. The figures are known—Dr Kearney gives them—and while they cannot be more than approximations there is good reason to believe they are close approximations. They certainly suggest very strongly that any problems which existed arose from the distribution and quality of the force available, not from its being too strong.

A more serious complaint, however, is that a quite definite impression is given that the 'counter-reformation clergy' may be equated with the religious orders. The implication of the statement on p. 111, 'the gentry and the merchants, from whose ranks so many of the regular clergy were drawn, were unquestionably influenced by this religious movement', does not quite tally with what is said on the preceding page : 'In 1600 the Irish College, Douai, was reported to contain sixty young men, the sons of gentry and merchants.' Douai was, of course, a seminary for the diocesan or secular clergy. While there may be some ambiguity here, the statement (also on p. 110) that 'there was a marked difference of standard between the seculars ordained at home and the regulars trained in continental seminaries' seems to leave no room for any such ambiguity. Yet it just does not correspond with the facts. This division, between those who received a full seminary course abroad, and those ordained in Ireland, existed in both groups of clergy, and as far as can be assessed from accusations and counter-accusations the problems arising from the almost necessarily insufficient training which was all that could be given in Ireland was more acute among the regular clergy than among the seculars. In August, 1626 we find Propaganda insisting on tightening the regulations concerning the establishment of religious novitiates in Ireland, and its further records show that this was by no means the end of the trouble. The misunderstanding may have arisen from the fact that Franciscan sources have been more extensively published than others, and of course the Franciscans, with their colleges at Louvain and Rome, were very well placed to ensure that most of their members got a full course of studies abroad.

It all goes to show, I suppose, that Irish history is particularly adept in evading the final statement : its sources are too scattered, too hard to assemble. Dr Kearney has ranged very widely in assembling the material for this book, and he has certainly worked it into a study which is a notable contribution to our understanding of Strafford in Ireland.

PATRICK J. CORISH

ANALECTA HIBERNICA. No. 20. Survey of Documents in Private Keeping : Second Series. By John L. Ainsworth and Edward MacLysaght. Dublin : Stationery Office. 1958.

The first series of these reports on documents in private keeping in Ireland appeared in 1944. The work of discovering, examining and reporting on these documents was begun by Dr Edward MacLysaght, now Chairman

of the Irish Manuscripts Commission. He was appointed to the National Library in 1943, and the work was continued from that date by Mr John Ainsworth, who was in turn appointed to the staff of the National Library in 1950. The reports printed in this second series deal only with documents that belong to owners who do not wish to part with them. When examination has revealed the existence of valuable documents, it is the policy of the National Library to acquire them, if the owner is willing, for the State. They are then added to what is now a very extensive collection of such manuscripts in the National Library.

The papers described in this report belong to the following families: Colclough, Dillon, Doneraile (second report), Mansfield, Nugent, Power O'Shee, Shirley, Smyth, Vigors. There is a very useful list at the end of the volume (pp. 311-17) of other smaller collections, not included in this report, but of which typed reports can be consulted in the National Library.

AUBREY GWYNN

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS, Vol. 2. 1616-32. By Michael Roberts. Longmans. 1958. Pp. xiii x 848. 7 Illust. 4 Maps. 84s.

Professor Michael Roberts reached Belfast by the unusual route of Oxford, Sweden and South Africa and each stage of his journey produced a book. The present work is the second of two magisterial volumes on the subject of Swedish history from 1611-32, in which he has made available the conclusions of numerous Swedish monographs upon what is understandably a much frequented period. To master and present such a mass of historical fact was a formidable task on a scale which English historians increasingly fight shy of. It was complicated by the fact that Gustavus Adolphus was more than merely a national figure and to deal with the last years of his life satisfactorily, the historian must come to grips with the detailed diplomacy of Europe at a very confused period. This carries with it the danger that the Thirty Years War may so command the attention that its impact upon Sweden as such may be lost sight of. Professor Roberts does not entirely overcome this difficulty, and his second volume, so far from being a history of Sweden, eventually is metamorphosed into the middle volume of a badly needed English treatment of the Thirty Years war. It is an ill historical wind that blows nobody any good.

In the opinion of the present reviewer, the best part of the book is the first third (by ordinary standards, a book in itself) when Professor Roberts examines the economic foundations of Gustavus's power and the military reforms which made his success possible. In just over a hundred and fifty pages, he manages to provide a detailed sketch of the Swedish economy of the time, its basic wealth in iron and copper, the place of unskilled labour from Finland, the recent influence of foreign capitalists (of whom De Beer was the most outstanding) and the various methods which were adopted by Gustavus and Oxenstierna to raise money for their foreign adventures. He then goes on to discuss Gustavus's precise contribution to the art of war. He confirms the general impression that Gustavus was a great general but he

denies that he was an original military thinker. Gustavus's achievement was to bring together a number of contemporary innovations and to carry further the changes introduced by Maurice of Nassau some thirty years before. Gustavus re-introduced into battle the possibility of manoeuvre and his reliance upon linear formations, his emphasis upon training and his imaginative combination of cavalry and infantry, soon brought to an end the supremacy of the Spanish tercio which relied overmuch upon mass, precisely because the majority of the troops were ill-trained. Professor Roberts puts Gustavus's achievement into perspective and his analysis is all the more convincing because in his conclusions he is careful not to push Gustavus's case too far. In some ways indeed he thinks Wallenstein was his superior. This chapter has a particular interest for Irish readers in that it supplies the background for the confederate wars in Ireland, when many of those taking part had had experience in Europe. It was certainly significant that the two leading generals on the Catholic side had been brought up in traditional methods, soon to be outmoded, and never were to master the new type of warfare. These chapters on military matters are indispensable for understanding the outlook of Owen Roe, of Preston and above all of Cromwell.

The remaining two thirds of the book deal with the impact of Sweden upon the position of unstable equilibrium within the Holy Roman Empire. Professor Roberts plunges his readers immediately into the quagmire of negotiation and counter-negotiation, which marks the history of these years, and sure of his own footing, he sets off at a deceptively easy pace. Those following, however, may well feel that the way is not well enough sign-posted. The truth is perhaps that the Thirty Years' War demands its own style of writing and unless extra efforts are made to maintain clarity, it is all too easy for detail to become lost in detail. During this period complicated negotiations took place only to be superseded as soon as agreement was reached and Professor Roberts remarks on more than one occasion, ' no sooner was the ink dry on this document that it was out of date.' It is easy to understand therefore that sections of this book are invaluable for reference but do not make for sustained reading. But to demand that so detailed a treatment of political and military struggles should make easy reading is perhaps ungracious. There is nowhere else for students to go for so authoritative an account of an episode which has been regarded, not unreasonably, as marking the end of the middle ages, the last occasion on which religion and politics were united in the consideration of statesmen.

Curiously enough, when it comes to Swedish politics, and the role of Gustavus in dealing with political problems at home, the book is least satisfying. It is difficult to believe that there was no opposition to the military adventures of Gustavus, if only on economic grounds, yet the general impression left by Professor Roberts is that Gustavus was always in complete control of affairs and had never to make concessions. On the other hand, the Vasa kings, in his view, made no really long term decision about Sweden's future. ' The extension of the nation's commitments had increased upon them so gradually, they had been drawn by such clear necessities from one predicament to the next, that there was perhaps no one point of time at which a man might have cried halt to the process which was dooming Sweden to the

strains and responsibilities of existence as a great power.' Even the crucial decision to intervene in Northern Germany was not really crucial in Gustavus's eyes, except in a military sense. Such a view disposes perhaps too easily of the political decisions which are made by a nation's rulers.

H. F. Kearney

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD : A survey from the French Revolution to the present. By. E. E. Y. Hales. Eyre & Spottiswoode in association with Burns & Oates. 1958. Pp. 332. 30s.

Although this volume is not exclusively concerned with Church-State relations (there is for example a chapter on Modernism) that topic inevitably occupies most of Mr Hales's space. This was perhaps the wisest course to take, for it was during the period covered by this book that the modern State, whether traditionalist, liberal or totalitarian, came to assume powers of control and influence over the lives of its subjects which would have been impossible at any previous stage of history. Mr Hales does not say very much about the Industrial Revolution (indeed his treatment of social questions is among the weaker portions of the book) but it seems clear that the tremendous technological changes of the last 150 years have presented the State with new weapons and the Church with totally new problems.

Mr Hales's book is at its best on the period 1815-1878 on which he himself is a specialist. The author of *Pio Nono* explains the issues and events of Pius IX's pontificate lucidly and preserves the view of the older book that Pius's policy was the right course of action at the time ; he admits however, that the happiest method of promulgation was not perhaps adopted for the Syllabus of Errors of 1864. Mr Hales also seems to feel that the *affaire Lamennais* could have been more tactfully handled by Gregory XVI : ' —even by the standards of his own times, the Pope's encyclicals can only be called reactionary ' (p. 100).

When Mr Hales arrives at the twentieth century his treatment is less illuminating and a rather journalistic impression is given, particularly by the last chapter, which takes the story from 1939 to 1956. This is not really Mr Hales's fault; the primary and secondary source material which is of so much help to the historian of the nineteenth century is not available for the historian of the twentieth. Even a general sketch, which is all that Mr Hales has attempted, is bound to suffer from this drawback.

Some strange omissions from Mr Hales's discussion may be noted. One would have expected a little more to have been said on the importance of Belgium as a pioneer of a new relationship between the Church and liberal democracy, particularly as this subject has received elaborate scholarly analysis in the post-1945 period by such historians as Simon and Haag. The index may be searched in vain for a mention of Cardinal Sterckx of Malines who was one of the most important exponents of practical Catholic politics in modern western liberal conditions. Irish readers will be surprised to find no reference to the Constitution of 1937 and the combination of Catholic and

liberal principles which it contains. The Constitution of Salazar's Portugal, the best working model of a Catholic Corporative State, is also passed over in silence.

These criticisms apart, it would seem that Mr Hales's book should be of great help in setting the background for problems still very much with us and in opening the eyes of Catholics and non-Catholics alike to the situation confronting the Church in our own times.

JOHN B. MORRALL

NORTHERN LIGHTS : The Story of Lord Derwentwater. By Ralph Arnold. Constable. 1959. Pp. 268. 25s.

This book is the story of a family as well as of an individual. The Radcliffes were prominent recusants in the reign of Elizabeth I and played their part in the history of northern England during the seventeenth century. But their downfall came when James, third Earl of Derwentwater, a grandson of Charles II, was mistaken enough to rise for the Old Pretender in 1715. He was subsequently executed, and it seems that he might have got away with his life if he had not persisted in a courageous confession of Catholicism. His estates, restored to his son, were again confiscated by the Crown in 1732, as the nearest family claimants were proscribed Jacobite exiles. Mr. Arnold adds a last chapter on the strange history of the Derwentwater estates until they were broken up and sold in the 1870s.

JOHN B. MORRALL

LITERATURE

ALBERT CAMUS AND THE LITERATURE OF REVOLT. By John Cruickshank. Oxford University Press. 1959. Pp. 249. Price (in U.K. only) 25s.

Much of modern writing is post-mortem elaboration on Nietzsche's laconic obituary : God is dead. Many of the writers of the death-notices, all too obviously, welcomed the demise of the deity as an ending to centuries of senile decay. But, since God had for so long gone as the unchallenged lord of the universe and arbiter of human conduct, His death posed as many problems as it resolved. New prophets were quickly in demand to establish some kind of meaning and order in the post-Christian wilderness. To add to the difficulty of their task they soon had an embarrassment of corpses on their hands—Democracy, Progress, Science *inter al.*—and when they talked of 'the human condition' they meant to suggest the hushed, critical atmosphere of the sick room.

Among the new prophets Albert Camus occupies an unique position in his no-man's-land between political philosophy and imaginative writing.

The role of high-priest of neo-paganism has been partly achieved by him through his copious magisterial utterances and partly thrust upon him by a France which increasingly idolizes its writers. When Sartre maliciously observed that Camus included among his personal effects a portable pedestal, he was merely displaying a pulpiter's all-too-human chagrin at the growing congregation of a rival. For in France there are these three, Sartre, Camus, and Malraux, and the greatest of them, for many, is Camus.

Already at least half-a-dozen full-length studies of Camus have appeared and hundreds of articles on various aspects of his work. The volume under review is a substantial contribution to the difficult task of introducing a French writer to an English audience. One indication of the importance of Camus is the fact that he has imposed his own meaning on words like innocence, lucidity, revolt, atheism, and the absurd, and Dr Cruickshank does well to take Revolt as a keynote, his resulting study falling easily into three parts : I. Revolt as an attitude to Life, II. Revolt and Politics, and III. Revolt and Literature.

Part I. is divided into three chapters, ' The Quest for Happiness,' ' The Nature of the Absurd,' and ' The Emergence of Revolt,' bringing us down to the publication, in 1951, of *L'Homme révolté*. In this phase we meet the not-so-well-known Camus of the carefree, Algerian days when, as a true *homme du midi*, a sultry child of the sun, he exulted in physical pleasure and beauty, and saw the Greek way of life, rather than the later Christian inheritance, as the best hope for contemporary man. This pagan/Christian and southern/northern dichotomy has persisted as one of the most individual features of Camus' work. Alongside the open-eyed acceptance of life is the refusal to accept the idea that death is a door opening on to another life, but uneasy reflection on life and death brings forth the almost panicky opening sentence of *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* : 'There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide.'

Camus was preoccupied with this problem during what may be called the Cartesian phase of his development, and here Cruickshank is a particularly good guide. His closely reasoned analysis of the nature of the absurd is, perhaps, one of the best features of the book. Camus, in 1939, said that ' to establish the absurdity of life cannot be an end, but only a beginning,' and proceeded to retrieve many of the positions which he apparently had abandoned, invoking his now famous wager in favour of the absurd, and substituting revolt for suicide. At this point he resembles a conjurer who gives an assurance that there is nothing up his sleeve, and proceeds to draw from the sleeve whilst invoking magical terms like *lucidity, innocence, freedom, and intensity.*

But even those who cannot accept Camus' philosophic sleight of hand can still reckon with him as a writer on politics, or, better still, as a creative writer simply. Camus' preoccupation with politics springs from his belief that both politics and art attempt to give form and coherence to the manifest disorder of life. From his position as non-Marxist left he tries to visualize the future of a universe changing so rapidly that even the present U.S.A./U.S.S.R. division is destined to assume a position of secondary importance. The artist's contribution to politics is particularly necessary, Camus feels, because the science of international relations has been the most short-sighted

and static of all the sciences. Yet Camus himself, the cartographer of World Unity, can on occasion be as short-sighted as the next, as witness his concerted campaign against the admission of Franco's Spain to UNESCO. This and much else of interest, especially the Camus-Sartre dispute publicized in the fictionalised account of Simone de Beauvoir, is dealt with in the section on *Revolt and Politics.*

For many, Camus did not become a name until he won the Noble Prize for Literature in 1957, and their interest in him begins and ends with his novels, and, to a lesser extent, his plays. Not that these were written in time taken off from his philosophizings. Indeed, he regarded the novel as a legitimate vehicle for philosophy. (Incidentally, the recent *rapprochement* in France between metaphysics and fiction may give second thoughts to our liberal-minded critics who so often lean over backwards in denying artistic validity to the ' Catholic ' novel.) It is hard to avoid feeling sometimes that French writers use the novel as a medium of communication with much the same reservations as the churches use sponsored television, sugar-coating the philosophic pill for mass consumption, but reserving the intimate communication, the personal revelation, for the philosophical essay. This feeling hardly does justice to the may artistic excellences of the triad of novels—*L'Estranger*, *La Peste*, and *La Chute*—but it remains true that they are to be understood more fully by treating the essays as footnotes or prolegomena. Dr. Cruickshank devotes two chapters to *The Art of the Novel*, and his analysis of *La Peste* (the most anti-Christian of all his books, on Camus's own admission) is more satisfactory than that of *La Chute*. The latter, with its obvious Christian parallels, made some jump rather too hastily to the conclusion that Camus was moving in the direction of Rome—this point is well made in the earlier biography by Philip Thody—but Cruickshank, it seems, is so determined not to make this mistake that he refuses to admit any Christian convictions in *La Chute*, and interprets it as a work of sustained irony. It may be, however, that the irony of Camus has come the full circle to being ironical about itself. The enquiry Camus set himself in 1944—to see if man, without the help of religion or of rationalist thought, can create his own values entirely by himself—must, in the case of such an obviously sincere searcher, be beginning to bear fruit, and it is well for us to follow the continuously sympathetic attitude of French Catholic critics, feeling, with Father Moeller, that the last word is not yet spoken.

Since the theatre and the stadium are the two great passions of Camus, it is only proper that a generous chapter be devoted here to *The Drama.* In Ireland the theatre can hardly be accused of playing to the high-brow, nor do the jokes and allusions require much in the way of scholarly exegesis. In France the stage is regarded as the proper place for issuing serious statements on the problems of human existence, and has been used as such by writers as different as Sartre, Camus, Bernanos, and Mauriac. Though Camus came to the drama with considerable knowledge of stage-craft gathered in the *Théâtre de l'Équipe* in Algiers, his plays were hardly successes, and, as far as one can judge from merely reading them, they hardly deserved to be. But their predilection for situations of moral ambiguity has its compensatory side for the theologian, and their reflected attempt at elaborating

a new ethic, less unsophisticated than our traditional teaching, with its numbered and ready-packed conditions for determining the morality of everything from a just war to a lawful oath, is both salutary and challenging.

One thing that might have added to the value of this book would be a wider range of comparison with other writers, ancient and modern. Camus, with his avowed concern for the production of a modern form of tragedy, has many points of contact with Euripedes that could have usefully been investigated. Beyond a few references to his interest in ' the Greek way of life,' little is done to explain it. Suggestive parallelization could have been done between Camus and other Mediterranean writers like Moravia or Kazantzakis. But, all told, Dr. Cruickshank's book is a highly readable and enlightening commentary on Rachel Bespaloff's ' few pages, few words, but in these few, modern man and his torment, his sin and his grandeur.'

THOMAS HALTON

THE OXFORD COMPANION TO FRENCH LITERATURE. Compiled and edited by Sir Paul Harvey and J. E. Heseltine. Clarendon Press : Oxford University Press. 1959. pp. x and 771 with two maps. 45s.

THIS book is as indispensable as its predecessors : the *Oxford Companions* to English, classical and American literature, to music and to the theatre. It will be used mainly, of course, as a quick check on trivial details of fact too minute, even for an encyclopedic memory, to retain for long. But, even when an exhaustive study of an author or his period is being undertaken, many of the articles will provide a useful, introductory sketch-plan of the ground to be covered.

It is not to be expected that a large book—beginning ' Abailard, see *Abélard* ' and ending with ' Zutistes, Les, a short-lived literary society remembered for its association with *les décadents* . . . '—should deal equally satisfactorily with everything it touches. As a matter of fact, the miniature biography of Abélard is a model of compression and, in general, the articles are pleasingly dispassionate and objective. In a book of reference the personal opinions of the compilers should be excluded : to be perfect in its kind the book should be unreadable. This book is not unreadable which shows that the warmth, hostility, interest or, even, boredom of the compilers was not always repressible. Some of the veiled opinions are irritating, with many it is possible to be sympathetic but one is prepared to accept all because what might have been a dull dictionary has appeared as an interesting book tempting one to waste time in informative browsing. J. E. Heseltine, who completed the book after the death of her collaborator Sir Paul Harvey, makes an acknowledgment in the preface ' to some living and many dead authors encountered in the course of this work, those who turned what seemed at times a crucifixion into a voyage of discovery ; who perhaps delayed progress, for they insisted on being read ; and who time and again forced a jaded compiler to forget a world hungry for reference books and to dwell, rather, with beauty and truth—and often, blessedly, to laugh '.

With this book it is easy—if one is unscrupulous—to trick out remarks on almost any author with curious, impressive and colourful erudition. For instance, the article on Villon is disappointingly lacking in enthusiasm for the man or his poetry but it reminds one of some interesting facts. Villon—a pious but accomplished burglar, pimp and suspected murderer or cosh-boy—was associated with the Coquillards, a guild of ruffians so-called from their symbol : the cockle-shell device of St James of Compostella sacred for centuries in Christendom. Alcofribas Nasier, otherwise known as François Rabelais, is better treated. Once again, at minimum cost to ourselves, we have erudition. The title of *Pantagruel* is derived from Simon Gréban's mystery of the *Actes des Apôtres* and the book had its origin in a contemporary chap-book : *Les Grandes et Inestimables Cronicques du . . . geant Gargantua* (sic.) The forebearance of Rabelais's religious superiors and his inexplicably honourable standing as a priest, right up to his amicably arranged secularization, is slurred over. It is thought that his obscenities ' offend the modern reader ' but I do not think they do. Finally, it is a pity to dismiss Panurge—*bien galand homme de sa personne*—in four lines and to write at greater length and nostalgically of Thélème : the monastery of men and women where the only rule was '*Fay ce que vouldras* '. Even from the grave, the *abstracteur de quinte essence* can still pull legs.

The article on Montaigne is warm and sympathetic. His brand of tolerant scepticism, seeing human nature as ' *vain, divers et ondoyant* ', makes an immediate appeal to modern sensibilities. How many would have known off-hand that Montaigne learned Latin before he could speak French and that his adopted daughter, Marie de Gournay, was an early blue-stocking ? The other literary phenomena of the 16th century, the poets of the Pléiade, are well dealt with in several articles. Some bland assumptions underlie the statement, to be attributed to Sir Paul Harvey, that the Pléiade rejected the medieval tradition in poetry with its ' popular and frivolous subjects and finicking forms '. No subject need be frivolous and, in their own way, the Pléiade were at least as finicking about form as the medievals. Real fussiness in formal rules arose from Malherbe's reformation of post-Pléiade poetry.

A lack of enthusiasm over Corneille is understandable enough but it is surprising that Racine receives such summary treatment. However, all the commonplaces of criticism are here and the subject is so well known that more is unnecessary. It would have been fairer in writing of Molière's *Tartuffe* to point out that the hypocrisy so mercilessly exposed was Jansenist or Jansenist-Catholic : not a normal Catholic thing at all. At least, so Molière believed. In the list of Molière's plays we find the incredible entry : ' *Le Misanthrope* (another masterpiece) ' ! There is only one *Misanthrope* in a poetical universe of its own.

There is certainly no lack of useful and interesting information here. Articles on *Literary -isms, Salons, Censorship* and *Theatres* are useful. The treatment of *Symbolism* is good, that of *Vers Libre* very good and the article on Existentialism is, for its length, excellent : ' . . . it is conceivable that in years to come it may be regarded less as a system of philosophy than as the metaphysical expression of the spiritual dishevelment of a post-war age '. Among the curiosities is a note on Vidocq the criminal turned detective and a few

short lines on Marshall Pétain's long agony. There is another curiosity in the note on Pascal : ' Against the relaxed morality which the Jesuits were *said* to teach he makes a vigorous appeal to public opinion . . . The *Lettres provinciales,* written with polite irony and the utmost simplicity, lucidity, and *objectivity* were an enormous success and dealt the Jesuits a blow from which they never recovered '. Under which king, Bezonian ?

JOHN C. KELLY

THE CHEQUER'D SHADE. Reflections on Obscurity in Poetry. By John Press. London : Oxford University Press. 1959. 25s.
CATCHMENT AREA—POEMS. By James Harrison. London : Oxford University Press. 1959. 10s. 6d.
THE FIRSTBORN. By Christopher Fry. London : Oxford University Press. 1959. 9s. 6d.
NEW POETS, 1959. Edited by Edwin Muir. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 1959. 18s.

AN essay on obscurity in poetry would seem to provide the perfect introduction for a review of some recent volumes of poetry. Alas, there is little here to disconcert or dismay ; all four volumes are mild and moderate, typical products of a mid-century's pause. *The Chequer'd Shade* was recommended by T. S. Eliot in *The Sunday Times,* and, indeed, it is a very amiable discussion of an important aspect of poetry. As in Day Lewis's *The Poetic Image* a smooth flowing stream of quotations winds around the main topics : obscurity in ' Vocabulary and Syntax ', obscurity in ' Reference ' and ' Thought ' and so on. Good but rather obvious points are scored ; that, for instance, many accepted poets, like Milton and Shakespeare, are often deeply obscure. Thus Pope's edition of Shakespeare, ' like Bentley's edition of Milton, is an endeavour to purify the text of the irregularity, the imprecision and the logical absurdities of language which are presumed to have been interpolated by a malicious or incompetent editor '. Besides metaphorical density of language, obscurity may be due to precisions of special knowledge. Thus the word *bugle* in ' cluster of bugle blue eggs thin ' (Hopkins) probably refers to *Ajuga repetans,* a common plant blossoming in May (here Mr Press quotes Geoffrey Grigson, like Hopkins, a keen amateur botanist). But these permanent sources of obscurity are complicated in modern poetry by a general widening of reference. Thus, the Graeco-Roman basis of European civilization is now seen as only *one* tradition, and not necessarily the highest ; Hokusai and Michelangelo are both masters in the *Musée Imaginaire* of modern aesthetics. To the young American undergraduate Eliot may be clearer than Milton whose use of the pastoral he may reject with Johnsonian forthrightness as pretentious and obscure.

As a general essay, *The Chequer'd Shade* lacks the vitality of Jarrell's ' The Obscurity of the Poet ' in *Poetry and the Age.* And the analyses of particular aspects of the problem are dismally general : after Donald Davie's *Articulate Energy,* for instance, Press's observations on syntax seem feeble, hardly even a valid summary of present thought on the matter. Criticism should be more *relentless ;* but then *The Chequer'd Shade* is explanation rather than criticism.

One of Mr Press's most striking quotations is a chorus from *The Dog Beneath the Skin,* describing the backstreets of an industrial city :

> Foul as a theatre is the foul thoroughfare : some sitting like sacks, some slackly standing,
> Their faces grey in the glimmering gaslight : their eyeballs drugged like a dead rabbit's,
> From a window a child is looking, by want so fretted his face has assumed the features of a tortoise . . . .

Eloquent and memorable as poetry, surely, but where are the verse-dramas of the Thirties now ? Mr Christopher Fry's *The Firstborn* lacks the vigour of Auden's language, but is probably more viable as theatre : I found it, to coin a phrase, linguistically insipid. In any event, the poetic drama is a special subject, with its partisans : one is on dangerous ground. Mr Eliot has wisdom, but no gift for the theatre (not since *Sweeney Agonistes,* anyway); Mr Fry has . . . the gifts of a good scenario or script writer. Beside the work of a real dramatist (Osborne in the second act of *Epitaph for George Dillon,* for instance) both seem palely academic in approach. Perhaps Yeats was right in retreating to the small audience ; his later plays are fascinating—but never performed, even in the Abbey. Certain revisions in this third edition of *The Firstborn,* including a revised ending, will be of special interest to admirers of Mr Fry's work.

New Poets 1959 contains the work of three young British poets—Ian Crichton Smith, Karen Gershon, Christopher Levenson. Smith is Scotch and begins from observation of the local scene :

> Striped-trousered, hard-black-hatted, sunday-sunned
> swayed to clasped hands they stand at the church door,
> the graced, unwasted flock . . . . . .
>
> ' Highland Sunday '

Christopher Levenson inherits all the modern landscapes, ' Airlift ', ' Autobahn ', ' Frontiers ' :

> At late-night cafes the sad arena of tables . . . . . .

Miss Gershon is equally fluent in a gnomic way : ' the angry skull/beneath the ground/destroys a city/to be found, (' Song for a Skull ').

Mr James Harrison's *Catchment Area* is a competent and agreeable collection. No texts for Mr Press here :

> I raised my hand to strike, then paused,
> As when the circling axehead swings
> To perch in air for a moment, poised
> And passionless, there intervened
> Some twig or twitch of conscious art.
> The blow fell glancingly and false.
> No need to teach that child his part
> Whom words or hands shall hurt when pride
> Has curbed their animating anger,
> He sees already, where three roads meet
> A young man and a white-haired stranger.
>
> ' Father and Son '.

A neat poetic parable, despite the dead language, and typical of Mr Harrison's unpretentious talent.

JOHN MONTAGUE

PHILOSOPHY and SCIENCE

THE GOD OF REASON. By Regis Jolivet. Faith and Fact Books : 15. London : Burns and Oates. 1959. Pp. 127. 7s. 6d.

THIS is a popular work of a serious kind which treats of the nature of the knowledge of God that man can acquire independently of Revelation. It is a translation of the volume which concludes the first part of the *Encyclopédie du catholique au xxème siècle.*

After an introduction dealing with the preliminaries, the author presents the proofs for the existence of God. These are arranged in two chapters, of which the first is devoted to the moral approach and the second to the metaphysical approach. Under the moral approach are grouped proofs based upon the unchangeable principles of truth and goodness, moral duty, man's destiny, universal consent, and mystical experience. The discussion is persuasive, free from extravagance, and should be greatly appreciated by the readers to whom the work is primarily addressed. The moral proofs have two advantages : they are easily understood, and, at least in the case of the first three, they evoke a response from personal experience. Mgr Jolivet has done well to give them prominence.

In dealing with the metaphysical approach, the author begins by discussing the objections of Kant, Brunschvicg, Le Roy, and Sartre. The roots of these objections penetrate too deeply and extend too far to permit of full discussion. Nevertheless, Mgr Jolivet's command of the two sides enables him to make his points convincingly at a simplified level. There follows a sympathetic account of the argument of St Anselm and of Descartes's proof from the idea of the perfect : though strict demonstrative value is not conceded to them, they are not dismissed as worthless.

At this stage the reader is introduced to the five ways of St Thomas. The general framework of the proofs is first explained, and then each proof is presented in some detail. Here, however, Mgr Jolivet does less than justice to St Thomas. In his account of the first way, he omits the proof of the principle *omne quod movetur ab alio movetur.* Yet this is the essence of the whole demonstration. To make matters worse, St Thomas is presented as if he too had been guilty of the same omission ; for the text of the *Summa* is translated and presented explicitly as a quotation, yet practically half of the text is omitted, and no indication of the omission is given. It is little wonder if the two explanatory paragraphs seem arbitrary.

A rather free translation of the second way is introduced as follows : ' I shall quote once again the words of St Thomas in their original form, on account of their great clarity '.

In the discussion of the third way we are told that this proof makes no appeal to ' the hypothesis of a causal hierarchy (*l'hypothèse de hierarchies causales*) within the world '. This interpretation might be challenged. Moreover, for the author, the essence of this proof seems to consist in showing that a contingent being cannot have in itself the adequate reason for its existence. But does it follow immediately that it must therefore have the adequate reason for its existence in another ? Only if it is immediately evident that

it must have an adequate reason for its existence. Perhaps this is immediately evident, although followers of Hume might not agree ; perhaps the author is satisfied that he has already established this point in his general introduction to the proofs. Nevertheless, the method of St Thomas, in his formulations of this third way, is to show that a contingent being has an adequate reason for its existence by *proving* that it is caused.

The treatment of the fourth way is too brief to be intelligible, whereas considerable space is devoted to the rather dubious demonstrations of Descartes, St Augustine, Lachelier, and Lagneau. The most obvious objection that can be raised against the fourth way (and it is the objection that readily occurs to the popular mind), finds its basis in the distinction that we make between different kinds of perfections. Yet, on this point Mgr Jolivet simply tells us : ' The argument applies on similar grounds to all perfections or qualities which can be raised so as to apply to the absolute (*qui peuvent être portées à l'absolu*) : being, unity, truth . . . ' But how do we decide which perfections may be treated in this way ?

The discussion of the fifth way is impressive, although the author expresses his doubts concerning its strict demonstrative value. A useful appendix, dealing with the relations between experimental science and the proofs for the existence of God, is added by way of conclusion.

The third chapter deals with the Divine Nature. Here the author provides a good treatment of the Divine Attributes, Pantheism, the Divine Personality, Creation, and Providence.

The Conclusion is largely concerned with the problem that, whereas the proofs are valid in themselves, they may fail to win conviction. It is true that the metaphysical proofs are complex and subtle, and that they may meet with opposition arising out of misunderstanding, lack of scientific rigour, or defective moral dispositions. Nevertheless, I consider that these conditions are accidental, and that it is misleading to state that ' the affirmation of God depends primarily on belief (*relève éminemment de la croyance*) '.

In dealing with Atheism, Mgr Jolivet warns : ' If we build everything upon the proof and its logical force, we open the door to doubt and scepticism. As Pascal saw, all metaphysical reasoning, even when the conclusion is reached, leaves a fear that we may be deceived, or at least that we may not have examined everything. Moreover, if we make God an object reached as a conclusion, we change God into a concept which, being separated from the source which gives it its true meaning, fails to carry conviction, even though it may leave an opponent silenced (*en convainquant peut-être, échoue à persuader*) '. This statement, which seems a little hard on metaphysics, requires careful interpretation. (The reader who has persevered in his efforts to grapple with the difficulties of the earlier chapters may be pardoned for wondering whether his efforts were worthwhile—although this might be unfair to Mgr Jolivet.) There is, of course, a difference between convincing the atheist that God exists and converting him to God. In the concrete, however, the two may not be so easily separable ; for what sincere man, assenting to the truth about God's existence, can evade the further implications concerning his relationship to God ? Metaphysics on its own is powerless to convert ; and that may be one reason why it frequently fails to convince. Moreover,

it may be that Christianity has so penetrated our culture that even for the atheist God means the God of Christian Revelation, with Whom relations of deepest intimacy are possible for man. Before such a conception metaphysics is inadequate : it offers so much less than had been expected. Thus a certain air of unreality surrounds metaphysical debate, and metaphysics is blamed for being too abstract. The problem, however, is perhaps not so much a problem of the relations between the abstract and the concrete within metaphysics, as a problem of the relations between faith and reason in the work of conversion.

The translation by Dom Mark Pontifex reads well ; in places, however, it seems a little free, if not even inaccurate. DESMOND CONNELL

LE PROBLÈME DE LA CAUSALITÉ ET SAINT THOMAS D'AQUIN. By Pierre Garin. (Bibliothèque des Archives de philosophie, 5e section, II). Paris : Beauchesne. 1958. Pp. 95.

WHAT happens when one ball strikes another ? Does something pass from one to the other ? If we say yes, we must suppose that one and the same motion can be successively the motion of two distinct substances. The only way to avoid absurdity is to suppress the distinction between the substances, and then we are driven in the direction of Monism. If we say no, we may still attempt to save causality by attributing it to God. But this, as the example of Malebranche shows, leads once again towards Monism. It is to Saint Thomas Aquinas that we owe the light which enables us to see our way through this dilemma.

For St Thomas there can be no question of one substance transferring any part of itself to another. The substance that acts does not transfer anything ; rather, by the contact of its own abundant perfection it draws from *within* the substance acted upon a realisation of the latter's capacity for a similar perfection. The author develops this solution in a general way, and then studies it against the background of the Thomistic analysis of generation and motion. In his Conclusion he traces briefly the main stages in the historical development of St Thomas's thought. An Appendix is devoted to the principle of causality.

I recommend this book very strongly : it is a work of quite remarkable depth. It penetrates beyond the use of terminology to grapple with the elusive meanings that are so often left poorly explored. The author, for example, is not content with asserting the existence of contact between *agens* and *patiens ;* he tries to tell us what this contact is. I liked especially his insistence on the fact that the rôle of the *patiens* is not merely ' *assujettissement à l'agent* ', but above all ' *aptitude intérieure à l'élargissement* '. Some may be surprised to learn that St Thomas maintained that *actio est in agente ;* others will challenge the author's view that there is a real distinction between *actio, passio,* and motion. But all will derive profit from reading a brilliant and subtle analysis of this difficult problem.

On page 77 the author assigns the first edition of Malebranche's *De la recherche de la vérité* to 1700. This was the date of the fifth edition ; the first edition had appeared in 1674–1675. DESMOND CONNELL

HISTOIRE DE LA PHILOSOPHIE MODERNE. Par Roger Verneaux. Paris : Beauchesne et ses fils. 1958. 204 pp. 690 fr.
SITUATION DE LA PHILOSOPHIE CONTEMPORAINE. Par Stanislas Breton. Paris-Lyon : Emmanuel Vitte. 1959. 200 pp. 900 fr.

THE chance that laid these books together on the reviewer's desk was not unhappy for, despite considerable differences in style and intention, they are strikingly complementary. It is not merely that they dovetail chronologically—M. Verneaux, surveying the period ' of which Descartes was the father and Kant the pedagogue ', ends with Hegel and Kierkegaard, and M. Breton begins with Karl Marx—but they share a deep conviction that the history of philosophy is continuous. M. Verneaux's history looks forward to contemporary developments in philosophy while M. Breton's essays look back at the history of philosophy and this double signposting of the road shows a remarkable consistency.

It is, of course, a mistake to assert without qualification that modern philosophy began with Descartes ; just as it is arbitrary to draw a line between Hegel and Marx to mark the beginning of contemporary philosophy. Still, one must begin (and end) somewhere. A better starting-point than most is with the *cogito* of Descartes, *l'audace,* M. Breton puts it, *du cavalier qui partit un beau matin d'un si bon pas.* M. Verneaux gives a concise and very attractive account of the period ushered in by Descartes. It is not an uncritical account for the author assures us that the descriptive method, assigning an equal value to all systems of philosophy, bears the embryo of scepticism. His evaluations of the systems he describes are brief and to the point. They are made in the belief that thomism has nothing to fear from comparison with modern philosophies.

The continuity of modern and contemporary philosophy is seen repeatedly. Pascal is said to foreshadow every one of the themes exploited by existentialism with the exception of liberty (p. 41), while M. Breton points out (p. 29) that the existentialist analysis of liberty was anticipated in a little-known page of Schelling. M. Verneaux refers in passing (p. 170) to the notion of ' intentionality ' as an escape from Kantianism, while M. Breton (p. 44) makes the point that the ' intentionality ' so much invoked by Husserl and his followers came, through Brentano, from thomism. We find Wolff's division of philosophy adopted by modern scholasticism, whether thomist or not. We meet Kant's strange and fateful willingness to believe that Wolff's was the only metaphysical system he need study—a faith as touching as that of Marx, who took Hegel's word for it that the Hegelian dialectic was the crowning achievement of twenty-five centuries of speculation ! We discover how it was that, in various ways, Kant fathered the agnosticism, phenomenalism, idealism, positivism and moral formalism of modern times. And withal M. Verneaux does not lack the human touch. He tells of Pascal's invention of the wheelbarrow, of Berkeley's advocacy of the curative properties of tar-water (a more integral part of his later thought than might be supposed) and of the stormy friendships of Fichte and Schelling, who quarrelled mortally over the substitution of the Absolute for the Ego, and of Schelling and Hegel, who fell out over the nature of the Absolute !

The history of modern philosophy is one matter ; the history of contemporary philosophy is quite another. ' It is ', M. Breton begins his book. ' a history still in the making. The historian needs a history that has run its course, for one only sees dead things clearly '. That difficulty has beset the contemporary historians of all ages, more or less acutely. The medieval nominalists pointed out that reality is larger than logic, that the concept is but the palest shadow of the existing individual ; many presentday writers are vociferous on the point. The specimen butterfly, we are told, treated with cyanide and mounted, is a far remove from the colourful loiterer of the meadows ; philosophy in a still-life portrait is not philosophy at all. Not all go to the extreme of condemning history of philosophy out of hand. Heidegger, for example, is willing to acknowledge that his speculation begins with the thought of others—a point of view sympathetically entertained by M. Gabriel Marcel in his paper recently published in *Studies*. But there is a kind of contemporary philosopher who can find no place for the history of philosophy, who wishes to be free of the legacy of the past. Yet, as M. Breton notices with a certain irony (p. 57), the contemporary often proves to be ancient and the ancient contemporary. He cites an apposite remark of Scheler's about the medieval commentators who made some daring innovations in the name of the ' authorities ' they followed, while the moderns, too proud to be commentators, have with great effort and not always happily, rediscovered the ancient conceits. To be an innovator without first studying the past is, as M. Breton in his lively way puts it (p. 141), to risk rediscovering America every morning !

The study of contemporary philosophy, then, presupposes the reading of the history of philosophy. M. Breton's reflections on the main currents of contemporary philosophy—existentialism, marxism and neo-positivism—are the fruit of an historical formation. His method is reflective rather than descriptive and consists in examining some of the implications of each of these philosophies and their possible development in the future. These highly abstract essays, it will be understood, are more difficult reading than the sober analyses of M. Verneaux ; but they are not less rewarding. M. Breton is much influenced by two writers who are hardly known in the English-speaking world, Max Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann. His most spirited pages are reserved for the pretensions of certain existentialist philosophers. He is not afraid to suggest that the arbitrariness of some of Heidegger's interpretations of the ancients makes one suspect his competence ; or to call Sartre's verbal ingenuity sleight of hand (p. 142). He has least to say about neo-positivism (in which he traces the influence of the Vienna Circle and of Wittgenstein in particular). This is a pity for this overshadows everything else in philosophy written in English.

In all this M. Breton is, as he is well aware, giving hostages to fortune. It is only when contemporary philosophy has become past and can be viewed at a distance that one can safely distinguish between the intellectual pyrotechnists, who leave behind only a cloud of unknowing, and the luminaries that will remain in the philosophical firmament. Will the future look back to Sartre or to Marcel ? It is no wonder that M. Breton concludes that his meditations on the situation of contemporary philosophy can reach no

conclusion (p. 196). Still, interim surveys like his are not only useful but necessary ; above all when they see the new generation's innovations against a background of the history of philosophy in which there is nothing new under the sun. That is ultimately why M. Verneaux's *Histoire* is such a suitable propaedeutic to M. Breton's meditations on the plight of contemporary thought.

M. B. CROWE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION, Vol. XXXI, 1957 — *Ethics and Other Knowledge.* Office of the Secretary of the Association, Catholic University of America, Washington, 17, D.C., 1957. Pp.236. 3.50 dollars.

' Ethics and Other Knowledge ' was the theme discussed at the Thirty-first Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association. The resulting volume of Proceedings is an exceptionally interesting one. The Presidential Address of Fr G. P. Klubertanz, S.J., ' The Empiricism of Thomistic Ethics,' strikes a polemic note. It states that ethics lags behind the other branches of modern scholastic philosophy and attacks an undue complacency of modern scholastic moralists, said to be responsible. Two recent books, Fr Klubertanz says, should give pause to any such complacency, Jacques Leclercq's *La philosophie morale de saint Thomas d'Aquin devant la penseé contemporaine,* (Louvain, 1955) and *Christian Ethics,* a collection of readings edited with an Introduction by Waldo Beach and H. Richard Niebuhr (New York, 1955). These books tend to show Thomistic ethics in an unfavourable light and should put the defenders of St Thomas on their mettle. Fr Klubertanz is very critical of Canon Leclercq's book ; he draws up a severe indictment, only a fraction of which he can attempt to justify within the compass of his Address. When he does discuss his charges he cannot always be said to sustain them. He takes exception for example, to Canon Leclercq's suggestion that the ethics of St Thomas is apriorist and out of touch with experience. The rebuttal of this charge takes the form of demonstrating that St Thomas's ethics has an experiential basis. But when it is admitted that the references to experiential evidence are ' of the briefest ' (p.14 ; cf. p.18) and that the moral philosophy of St Thomas is as empirical as it can be ' under the limitations of his time and circumstances ' (p.17), one must be forgiven for thinking that the substance of Canon Leclercq's argument is conceded. Indeed, Fr Klubertanz is in agreement with Canon Leclercq's fundamental thesis that the problems of the twentieth century are not necessarily solved by the methods and assumptions of the thirteenth. Perhaps he does not make sufficient allowance for Canon Leclercq's characteristic style ; he is scandalized, almost, that of any doctrine of St Thomas it should be said : ' C'est un théorie de professeur satisfait ! ' Canon Leclercq's book was written to provoke discussion, not to end it. In fact, Fr Klubertanz ends by expressing appreciation for the catalytic effect of the book in setting off just the kind of discussion that will help to advance scholastic moral philosophy.

Fr E. T. Eschmann, O.P. in an interesting paper on ' St Thomas's Approach to Moral Philosophy,' stresses the dependence of ethics upon metaphysics,

in particular upon a certain metaphysical conception of human free choice. The autonomy of the human person is stressed in contrast with the legalistic conceptions sometimes attributed to St Thomas—by the kind of existentialism represented by J.-P. Sartre, for example.

The problem of the relationship between ethics and moral theology clearly exercised many of the participants at the Meeting. Fr J. J. Doyle, S.J. writes on ' Ethics and the Faith ' and asks : In what sense can the Christian, who knows from Revelation that man has a supernatural destiny and is given supernatural means to achieve it, genuinely speculate about morals ? Is not what Bertrand Russell says of Aquinas apposite : ' Before he begins to philosophize, he already knows the truth ; it is declared in the Catholic faith. If he can find apparently rational arguments for some parts of the faith, so much the better ; if he cannot, he need only fall back on revelation. The finding of arguments for a conclusion given in advance is not philosophy, but special pleading ' (*History of Western Philosophy,* p.485) ? Fr Doyle firmly rejects the well-known thesis of Maritain that ethics must be a subalternate science of moral theology. (Fr Luke Burke, O.F.M., who comments on Fr Doyle's paper apparently does not share this rejection). Space does not allow Fr Doyle to give an adequate exposition of his own solution of the problem, which turns upon the meaning to be given to ' natural desire ' for the vision of God. Fr Doyle's paper is complemented by Dr J. O. Reidl's on ' Ethics and Natural Theology.'

Another problem studied is that of ' Intuition in Thomistic Moral Philosophy ' by G. Esser (with a commentary by Sr R. E. Brennan) ; and yet another read with interest was L. J. Lindon on ' The Significance of the Term *virtus naturalis* in the Moral Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas ' (with the commentary of R. J. Westley). In general, to judge from the commentaries, the discussions at this Meeting seem to have been lively ; which is as it should be when those who meet are philosophers.

M. B. Crowe

THE SLEEPWALKERS. By Arthur Koestler. London : Hutchinson. 1958. pp. 624. 25s.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SCIENTIFIC IDEAS TO 1900. By Charles Singer. Oxford University Press. 1959. pp. 525. 35s.

While Mr Koestler's book might be described as an account of the evolution of the Newtonian theory of the solar system, he by no means restricts himself to a sober systematic presentation of relevant historical and scientific facts. His treatment, ' a personal and speculative account of a controversial subject,' is refreshing, and brisk, if somewhat journalistic. He is extremely selective in the handling of available matter, largely because he has a thesis to uphold—the thesis that the progress of science is by no means a clean rational unilinear advance, that ' the history of cosmic theories, in particular, may without exaggeration be called a history of collective obsessions and controlled schizophrenias ; and the manner in which some of the most important individual discoveries were arrived at reminds one more of a sleepwalker's

performance than an electronic brain's.' A secondary issue which influences Mr Koestler's presentation is his interest in the changing relations of science and religion.

The Sleepwalkers, being by no means of uniform value throughout, can scarcely be judged as a whole. In the first brief eighty-eight pages Mr Koestler sweeps through the history of cosmology from the Babylonians to the sixteenth century. Such a sweep is necessarily sketchy, no great crime in itself, but questionable statements about such thinkers as Aristotle and Aquinas, and the caricaturing of medieval thought in general, leave one with the impression that the author lacks sympathy with the period, and is overeager to establish his theses.

The main portion of the book, more than three hundred pages, is devoted to the four men, Copernicus, Kelper, De Brahe and Galileo, who laid the foundations for the Newtonian synthesis. Koestler is certainly at his best in this section : he succeeds not only in presenting clearly the evolution of the thought of these men, but also in portraiting their human qualities and failings, and the fluctuations of their fortunes, with skill, imagination and substantial reliability. The author is very sympathetic towards Kepler, partly perhaps because he is an outstanding example of ' sleepwalking ' in science : his laws of planetry motion emerging in the context of chance cancellations of errors almost as an aside to his main concern. Galileo, on the other hand, appears in an unusually unfavourable light. Yet Mr Koestler in this part of the book seeks more than elsewhere for reliable sources, points to inadequacies in Santillana's recent work on Galileo, and presents what one must at least consider a valuable contribution to the Galileo controversy. With regard to the affair it seems reasonable to conclude from the evidence firstly that Galileo failed to recognize the hypothetical nature of the heliocentric system, which however Bellarmine, and indeed Aquinas long before, had grasped, and secondly that when challenged he failed to produce an adequate proof. Thirdly, while the action of the theologians may not have been entirely blameless, one must admit that it was rather an unfortunate time for a layman to appear in Rome with a private interpretation of scripture.

This part of the book should help to dispel the notion that European science began with Galileo, although a great deal more remains to be done in showing the continuity of scientific progress in the centuries before Galileo.

The account of the Newtonian synthesis which follows is brief but good, yet the author's opinion that our world view is still essentially Newtonian seems a lame excuse for omitting the twentieth century theory. In the Epilogue where Mr Koestler returns to the *leitmotifs* of the book, he is rather disappointing, and on the whole his reflections on such topics as the state of modern science, or the relations of science and religion, here and elsewhere in the book, add little to the value of the work

And what of the main thesis of the book ? It might be suggested that the psychological process of discovery is both more rational and more complex than the inspired meanderings of a sleepwalker. While indeed scientific progress occurs only in the context of a human situation, and fluctuates under the influence of environment, nevertheless the insight which grounds a new theory emerges only at the end of laborious rational familiarization and

phantasmic conditioning. It may emerge in moments of relaxation, because indeed of relaxation, and it may display an appearance of sheer fluke ; but it seldom emerges without that fully-rational prior organized accumulation of relevant data, and, to be lasting, the fruit of the insight must transcend the personality of the originator, give an adequate account of present achievement, and in some way point beyond to a higher synthesis.

In contrast with the *Sleepwalkers* Dr Singer's book is a sober attempt to present the complete story of science up to the beginning of our own century. No mean task : yet through the patient labours of the author and his colleagues we have here quite a readable account of the various periods in the development of experimental science. A pleasing feature of the book is that it ranges in unbiased fashion from physics to biology, each separate branch of science receiving proportionate attention. The narrative of course is necessarily factual, yet not dull, and an added interest are the simple but adequate illustrations.

The History begins with a comprehensive sketch of the various mediteranean periods including even a brief, but undistorted consideration of Greek philosophy. A general discussion of science under the empire and during the middle ages follows, where Dr. Singer brings out that, while scientific advances in these centuries may appear neglible, technology made steady progress. It was through such progress that systematic observation and experiment became possible, and when technology's role as a tool of science was fully recognized in the 16th century we find both science and technology advancing altogether more rapidly.

Regarding the influence of Aristotle on science at the beginning of this period of development, it is worth noting perhaps that this influence was felt largely through his more scientific works, in particular through his celebrated biological works but also, adversely, through his physical cosmology. The Aristotelian metaphysic, however, made available at the same period, and enriched essentially by Aquinas, gained small hearing, and little genuine understanding.

Not the least achievement of this short history is the clear presentation in the last section of the book of the rapid and varied advances in all branches of science since 1700. We see the gradual but immensely successful systematiaztion of the sciences, and the emergence of unifying principles. The history ends, however, on a note of puzzled expectation : for, following the centuries of progress there comes the century of paradoxes. The theories and advances of our own day, especially in theoretical physics, seem to elude interpretation, and even among the experts widely divergent views are to be found. It might be suggested that an adequate treatment of this problem of interpretation may very well emerge in the context of the neglected meatphysic of Aristotle and St Thomas already mentioned. Certainly this context provides a theory of knowledge and abstraction capable of throwing light on the obscurities of relativity, a treatment of form, potential reality and intrinsic finality not irrelevant to the foundations of biology, and a consideration of intentional activity rich in significance for evolution theory. Also, and perhaps most important, the metaphysics of motion, location and time in this system provide

ample proof of the insufficiency of classical physics, and promise a clearer understanding of quantum physics. The incompatibility of velocity and position secundum idem, for instance, may be grounded on the mutually exclusive relational nature of both, the neglect of this incompatibility in classical theory being due to the ideal nature of the limit processess of the calculus.

The author's own views on the nature of science occasionally emerge and one might be critical of them but for the fact that the issues he raises are both complex and problematic. Such digressions moreover both break the factual account and lead the reader to consider the deeper significance of scientific investigation and the underlying structure of human knowledge. Finally also they bear witness to the fact that much remains to be done towards the clarification of the fundamental concepts of science, and towards the appreciation of the nature of science in general, of its place in the unity of human knowledge and of its rôle in human life.

PHILIP MCSHANE

SCIENCE, RELIGION AND CHRISTIANITY. By Hans Urs von Balthasar. Translated by Hilda Graef. London : Burns and Oates. 1958. 18s.

This work will be of interest to those who would like to develop the great theme of Christian humanism. The dust-cover states that it is ' about the way in which Christians have to come to terms with the changed world we live in.' The phrase is an unhappy one. The author is concerned to analyse some of the significant changes that have taken place in the climate of thought of Western Europe, mostly within our lifetime. This analysis is important and necessary for several reasons. It is important for the Christian apologist to know as much as can be known about the mind of those to whom he must explain his message. It is helpful to know the specific areas of receptivity and rejection. Again it is important not to let the non-Christian world establish a prescriptive right to concepts which are essentially and fundamentally Christian : concepts such as brotherhood, service, human values. Finally, it is important for the Christian to be on guard against the danger of watering down or even of washing out the meaning of his own most important concepts : God, Redemption, eternity, etc. Something like that, it seems to me, is what the author of this essay is doing, rather than coming to terms with the world in which we live.

But the work is of a type and style which is uneasy in the English language. It belongs to the general class of apocalyptic writings, of which there are many examples on the continent, and its style is a high rhetoric which probably moves more freely in German. With great respect let it be said that Hilda Graef has not always served her author well. ' Endowed with the organism of reason and will ' (p. 126) sounds odd. And what of the following : ' Why should the ' I ' lose and offer it for a ' thou ' that, fundamentally, it cannot esteem any more than itself, if nothing else were offered in the ' thou ' than that which everyone knows, at least virtually, of himself ? ' And why does

the awkward ' Hell is the others ' appear on page 120, while the more usual version of Sartre's quip (' Hell is other people ') appears on page 128?

The original German title (Die Gottesfrage des Heutigen Menschen) suited the work better than its title in English. The juxtaposition of Science and Religion in the title is misleading because inevitably the reader will think (in English) of the natural or experimental sciences, while what is intended is *wissenschaft*, not *forschung*.

E. F. O'Doherty

THE SIXTH SENSE. By Rosalind Heywood. London : Chatto and Windus. 1959. 21s. Pp. 224.

There are many examples in the history of science of attempts to explain phenomena which subsequent investigation showed to be non-existent. One thinks of the epicycles of Ptolemaic astronomy, the concept of phlogiston, or nineteenth century ether. More to the point in the present context, perhaps, is the well-known question which Charles II addressed to the Royal Society in its earlier days. He wanted to know why it was that a live fish placed in a bowl full of water did not cause the water to overflow, whereas a dead fish did so. Many ingenious reasons were given by the members to account for a difference which did not exist. In contemporary science there are examples of forms of radiation, or particles in radiation, postulated as explanatory of the observed phenomena—and indeed successful in this respect—which subsequent research has shown to be non-existent. It is only a very short time ago since meson theory had to be completely revised. Aristotle was right : the first two questions a science has to answer are first, does such-and-such a thing exist, and second, does such-and-such an event occur ?

It is rarely easy, in a developed science, to answer these questions in respect of the fundamental postulates of the science itself. Are there quantum jumps ? was a favourite question of Schroedinger. Do electrons *exist* ? (in a realist philosophical sense, as distinct from their being mathematico-physical constructs successfully postulated to account for observed phenomena). Does the ' unconscious ' exist ? (as distinct from its being a logical construct which serves as a subject of predication, instead of remaining an adverb eternally qualifying participles). The scientist in his laboratory is often impatient of such questions, and irritated by the people who ask them. But somebody must do so. Galileo's theologian refused to question his belief that the moon was perfectly spherical—but Lord Kelvin with equal conviction thought that the all-pervading ether was the most indubitable fact of our experience.

There are some whose belief in extra-sensory perception is as strong as Lord Kelvin's belief in the ether. At first, on reading Mrs Heywood's book, one got the impression of caution. Here was somebody who was prepared to weigh the evidence. We are told on page 10 that some ' percipients ' ' appear to exercise precognition,' ' telepathy and precognition have appeared to function,' ' experimental research into the nature of this strange faculty (*ESP*) is still at a very early stage . . .' But by the time one reaches page 172 the authoress has come to believe that she has given a ' conclusive demonstration ' of *ESP*. What happened between pages 10 and 172 ? What happened was,

I fear, what always happens in the literature of this strangely beguiling subject. At first we are given in general terms the meaning of the term *Psi*. It is ' a blanket name for the psychic in general ; that is for the whole family of apparent phenomena and experiences , real or alleged, for which no physical cause has as yet been discovered.' Nothing could be fairer than that. But at once we are told that it includes extra-sensory communication ' for which the evidence is coercive.' Then follows through more than one hundred pages a very readable account of the classic work of Myers and his ' school,' largely on the problem of survival, through the phenomena of automatic writing and mediumship. The conclusion of this section is interesting. ' No absolutely watertight method of establishing the source of statements made by sensitives has been discovered. But that they often obtain their information by some kind of *ESP* it is hard to doubt.' (page 126). Not yet that ' conclusive demonstration.' Then follows in fifteen pages a brief account of the telepathic or clairvoyant work of Ossowiecki, Gilbert Murray and others. Impressive as these are, nevertheless they are not scientific experiments, and do not prove the existence of *ESP*.

It must therefore be the quantitative experiments which are described in the two following chapters which give the required demonstration. These experiments are associated chiefly with the name of J. B. Rhine, but other well-known names crop up : Dr Soal, Professor Broad, Dr Thouless. It is well to remember at this point that what is in question is not the possibility or fact of their being modes of obtaining knowledge other than through sensory perception. What is in question is the possibility of this happening *through natural means*, as a *natural endowment of all* or of *some human beings*. Divine Revelation, public or private, or communications from angels, devils or disembodied spirits are not in question. These phenomena, had the investigators believed in them, might have been a help through the section on Myers' work and mediumship. Again, the good faith of the Rhine school and its followers is not in question. This means that the figures for correct guessing, the control of conditions, the statistical methods, are not in question. What one must question however is the conclusion, no matter how often the authors on this topic repeat that one is prejudiced. The conclusion from the evidence is not that there exists extra-sensory perception, but that there exist a few series of correct guesses well above chance, and that these series have not yet been adequately explained. There is one possibility which I have not seen explored in the literature. It is the possibility of a *correct guesser* turning up. The possibility of correct guesses, and the chance of their occurrence, has been pretty satisfactorily worked out. But it is worked out on the assumption that one knows what a genuinely random guessing machine would do. It seems that any form of ' directed ' behaviour must differ, at least in the short run (how long is this ?) from the behaviour of a random guessing machine. Such behaviour would differ by being both better (for a time) and by being worse (for a time) than chance. And this is found to be the case. Moreover, should not one expect that *by chance itself* short bursts of correct guessing and short bursts of incorrect guessing would occur. In the cases where correct guessing is recorded, and where the chance of its occurring is astronomical odds, and where therefore it is particularly impressive, one nearly always reads that it

fell away to a normal chance level after a while. In sheer logic, as well as in mathematics, should not the whole series of guesses be taken into account ? In other words, a series of x correct guesses out of y instances should only become significant when x is given correctly out of *every* y. This has never been recorded, as far as I know. But even if a subject guesses x cards correctly out of every y presented to him, and even if $\frac{x}{y}$ is impressively above chance, this still does not conclusively demonstrate the existence of *ESP*—mathematics does not demonstrate existence. If it could be shown that every other hypothesis which might account for the facts had been examined and rejected because it did not fit the facts, and that the *ESP* hypothesis (*a*) does fit the facts, and (*b*) has been verified through its own consequences, one might begin to take it seriously, but even then its existence would not have been shown.

Mrs Heywood tells us that the Church disapproved of *ESP*. ' But since *ESP* appears to be a normal faculty in man, it naturally continued to crop up spontaneously here and there in spite of the Church's disapproval, and being an excellent source of profit, it also continued to be faked. Serious interest in it never died out, although driven underground by the Church.' (page 20). There are some strange ideas in this passage. First, *ESP* does not ' appear to be a normal faculty in man.' If it exists at all (which is not conceded) it is so rare as to require not a normal piece of human equipment to account for it, but a preternatural or supernatural source. The Church, so far as I know, has not expressed any opinion on *ESP* in the sense of a normal faculty of man. What the Church has consistently opposed and condemned was having recourse to divination (consulting spirits or demons) in order to acquire knowledge of future or distant events. This meant opposition to all forms of witchcraft, magic, and superstition : not at all opposition to research into *ESP*. Meyers's work and that of his followers would certainly not be accepted by the Church as legitimate research, since it involved having recourse to the usual practices of spiritualist seances. But the work on *ESP* as the term is technically used, i.e. the work of Rhine, is legitimate research (however convincing or otherwise its conclusions may be). Moreover, there are certainly some theologians and psychologists in the Church who are sufficiently impressed by Rhine's work to accept his conclusions. Father Reginald-Omez O.P. in Paris is one, and Father Celestine Bittle, O.F.M. Cap. not only accepts the conclusions, but tries (entirely without scientific warrant) to give an account of the *nature* of telepathy and clairvoyance. But Aristotle was right. Existence comes before essence at least in the logic of science.

There are many good Christians who believe in these phenomena. They believe, or at least let their outward behaviour appear to manifest that they believe, in such things as fore-knowledge of impending tragedy, (why is it always impending tragedy, and never the result of an examination or race or general election ?) ; many believe even in the fore-knowledge of animals (e.g. the foxes of Gormanstown). A still greater number believe in the possibility and fact of seeing ghosts, and this is true even of some priests, despite the fact that there is no matter in the disembodied soul to reflect the light which would be necessary for seeing. But I expect it is wiser to leave them in good faith. The wise Lehmkuhl puts it very well : *Ut nimia credulitas, ita etiam incredulitas nimia vitari debet a viro prudente.*

E. F. O'Doherty

RELIGION

MOTHER OF THE REDEEMER. Aspects of Doctrine and Devotion. Edited by Kevin McNamara. Dublin : M. H. Gill and Son Ltd. 1959. Pp. xv+312. 25s.

MEDIATRESS OF ALL GRACES. By Rev. Michael O'Carroll, C.S.Sp. Dublin: Golden Eagle Books Ltd. Standard House. 1958. Pp. 308. 21s.

EDITED and introduced by Dr K. McNamara, to whom at once a sincere word of thanks, *Mother of the Redeemer* contains (complete with footnotes, bibliographies, Index of Subjects and Index of Persons) the text of fourteen lectures delivered at the 1958 Maynooth Union Summer School.

A heightened interest in mariology i.e. in the study of Our Lady's rôle in the Christian economy of salvation, has undoubtedly been a notable feature of theological research and speculation in recent times. This is true to some extent even of non-Catholic theology and indeed a paper on the present situation of Marian doctrine and devotion among our separated brethren (if only it could have been fitted in) would surely have made an interesting and useful addition to the programme of the Summer School and to the book under review. Catholic theology however has of course easily made the largest and most significant contribution to recent mariological developments. While our separated brethren (and only few of them unfortunately so far) are simply engaged in reoccupying positions too hastily evacuated in the later days of the Reform, the Catholic theologian, with the resources of a richer faith, a more enlightened methodology and a more abundant source material than ever before, has, so to speak, been excavating the old positions, uncovering hitherto hidden foundations which give them new strength and new meaning, working on these finds in order to assess their precise significance and advancing opinions which, even when they arouse criticism and controversy, have the advantage of stimulating further study and research.

In *Mother of the Redeemer* we have a group of professional Catholic theologians and exegetes presenting ' aspects of [Marian] doctrine and devotion ' (subtitle) in the light of all these modern developments as seen and appreciated by each. Here, in a style that may be unromantically technical but which is only all the more effective for that, all the great mariological themes receive individual treatment : Divine Maternity, Immaculate Conception, Perpetual Virginity, Mary's role in Redemption, her Mediation of Graces, Assumption, Queenship and relation to the Church. In addition there are four opening essays on Our Lady in Scripture and in the Fathers as well as two concluding essays on the meaning of Lourdes and the doctrinal content of Irish Marian piety. Thus the scope of its contents as well as the competency of its authors make *Mother of the Redeemer* a most useful and desirable book for all who are engaged in preaching or teaching or who wish to sound the theological depths of their devotion to Our Lady.

Happening to be engaged, when this book came into my hands, on a study of the third canon of the Lateran Council of 649, I was naturally particularly interested in Fr D. Ryan's essay on Our Lady's virginity. The canon mentioned, being the *locus classicus* among official Church documents dealing with thi

subject, enjoying according to most scholars an authority almost as great as that of a General Council and containing, so it is commonly thought, in the phrase '*incorruptibiliter genuisse*' an affirmation of Our Lady's miraculous delivery, is obviously of special significance ever since in recent years Mitterer threw down his now well-known challenge to this latter interpretation of *virginitas in partu*. It was a distinct pleasure to read Fr Ryan's able discussion of Mitterer's views and of the meaning of '*incorruptibiliter genuisse*'. There can of course be no question of accepting Mitterer's position until the evidence in favour of the ordinary view, which has so much apparently in Tradition to commend it, is all re-examined and its precise dogmatic value reassessed. Since 1952 theologians have been very conscious of the need for such research work and hoping someone would undertake it. Here in Fr Ryan's essay we have what is probably the first effort by any scholar to satisfy this need. In my opinion he successfully challenges the ordinary interpretation of '*incorruptibiliter genuisse*' and shows convincingly that Mitterer's views are in opposition neither to this third canon of the Lateran Council of 649 nor to any defined doctrine of the Church. Whereas Fr Dermot Ryan would allow that the crucial phrase does refer to Our Lady's virginity but indicates the absence not of a normal delivery but of previous intercourse merely, I hope to show, in an article to appear in the forthcoming *Heythrop Journal* sometime next year, that the phrase, because of its anti-monothelite background, should be taken as excluding not the corruption of Our Lady's virginity either by intercourse or by childbirth but rather the corruption of Christ's human nature by original sin.

'May I be permitted to recommend for theological work the employment of a technical language. Many of our problems : spiritual maternity, mediation, co-redemption, queenship of the Blessed Virgin, would advance more quickly towards a solution if we treated them not as poets but as metaphysicians'. The pertinence of this statement by the French theologian Fr Bonnefoy, O.F.M. (quoted p. 241) is strikingly illustrated by Fr O'Grady's contribution to *Mother of the Redeemer*. Treating in two essays the very involved and vexed question of Our Lady's precise role in Redemption, objective and subjective, Fr O'Grady brings to bear on the problem an altogether remarkable and enviable precision of thought and language. The result is a masterly exposition of the conservative viewpoint which, even if it should fail to convince those who try to shelter finally behind a *difficilior theologia potior* principle, will still be welcomed by all as a most valuable contribution to the subject.

Mediatress of All Graces also brings us a collection of essays on Our Lady but essays this time of quite a different stamp. Fr O'Carroll is a spiritual writer and as such his aim in this book is to deepen our appreciation of the glories of Mary. Some of these essays are based on dogma, others on theological speculation merely, but happily the reader is not left in any doubt about this important distinction. Writing obviously out of a mind and heart deeply devoted to the Mediatress of all Graces, Fr O'Carroll has succeeded in these essays not only in being instructive and edifying in the best sense but also in communicating something of his own intense piety and love for Our Lady. This quality of the book indeed has quite a disarming effect on criticism but one cannot help noting a certain tendency to exaggerate : did the 'revival'

of devotion to Our Lady in the nineteenth century really have any influence on the Feminist movement? The supposed connection is not only unproven but, one might think, unhappy. And were Our Lady questioned about her faith and its motive, would she 'have made the same apologetic as our theologians have given us' (p. 107)? One notices also at times a certain lack of feeling for the niceties of theological thought and expression: is Christ 'a human individual personified by the Word' (p. 186)? Many theologians would object to the phrase; certainly, as a mere passing unexplained description of the Incarnation in what is not a formal work of theology, it seems rather out of place. Despite such blemishes however *Mediatress of All Graces* will undoubtedly help the reader to know and love Our Lady better.

MICHAEL HURLEY

HANDBUCH DER CHRISTLICHEN MORAL. By Karl Hörmann. Innsbruck—Vienna—Munich: Tyrolia-Verlag. 1958. Pp. 374.

THIS is neither a full-dress textbook of moral theology nor a synopsis. It is not addressed to the expert, or to the expert in the making. Its author, who is Professor of Moral Theology in the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna, explains that he had in mind an exposition of the Christian moral teaching for interested laypeople and lay study-groups. He concentrates on the principles of moral theology and uses a nice judgment in the choice of detail to fill out the discussion without blurring the clear outline. He dispenses with the panoply of footnotes and other *pièces justificatives* that one associates with moral textbooks. But he omits nothing of importance. The layman who masters this *Handbuch* will have an enviable grasp of the problems of moral theology.

A short introductory section deals with the nature, sources, method and division of moral theology. The body of the work falls into two parts, the first of which lays the foundations of morality while the second considers the moral life in detail. Man's end, the moral law as a means of reaching that end, the natural and supernatural armoury of man's moral life (conscience, freewill, revelation, divine adoption, the infused virtues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost), the moral act (its elements and the factors which modify it), the moral virtues and, finally, the notion of sin—all are discussed in turn in the first part. In the second part Professor Hörmann deals with a variety of problems—man in his relations with God, man as the subject of rights and duties, life, private property, man in society (family, Church, state), man and his fellow-man (charity and justice in particular), man and irrational creatures. There is a convenient index to the whole work. And if further enlightenment on any subject is required, the select reading-lists at the end of each section point the way. (The bibliography is, understandably in view of Professor Hörmann's purpose, limited to works and articles in German; it could easily be supplemented from the specialist literature in other languages).

This is popularization of theology at a very high level indeed. One wonders whether Continental Catholics are not better served by their theologians than English-speaking Catholics in this matter. When one has admired

the exhaustiveness and clarity of Professor Hörmann's exposition one must not be tempted to think that moral theology can ever be made *easy*. One admires, rather, the zeal of the German-speaking Catholic, for whom this book was written, who take up the challenge it presents of making a scientific study of moral theology.

M. B. Crowe

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE. By W. J. Battersby, PH.D., with a Foreword by H. O. Evennett, M.A. Pp. 346. London : Burns & Oates. 42s.

DON BOSCO. By Lancelot Sheppard. London : Burns & Oates. Pp. 196. 15s.

Like many another who flourished in the heyday of Jansenism and whose work came to maturity during the infected aftermath, Saint John Baptist de La Salle suffered rather severe torture from his biographers. Dr Battersby who is the authority on his Founder, has written a Life which is certain to replace the two hundred year old official version of Blain, and is likely to retain its authority indefinitely. The main requirements, as he saw them, were to bring out the human side of the Saint and to fill in the social and economic background, without which his work cannot at all be understood. The work succeeds admirably in these—and many other—respects.

A nobleman, a priest trained at St Sulpice, a Canon of Rheims, the Saint only reluctantly and, it seemed to him, by necessity, became a school-teacher and Father of a Congregation of teachers. His first steps in this direction were thought to have ' degraded him and disgraced his family ', for it was judged that his ' occupation of school-master was repugnant to religious dignity '. Indeed at the time such a statement was not altogether preposterous. For it was de La Salle who gave the career a great part of its dignity. The fact that he undertook the task of organizing popular education only to meet an obvious need was always a matter of consolation to him ; thus, he felt assured, the work was God's will and not rooted in his personal ambition.

He first broke with the classical tradition and dared to teach the reading of French through French and not through Latin. He first trained teachers, both lay and Brothers. He introduced the class method of teaching, though he encouraged as much individual attention as possible. He even envisaged and introduced some degree of ' adult education ' in 1690, and he ran a special school for juvenile delinquents.

A man of delicate sensibility and farsighted energy he could be both humbly submissive and immensely tenacious. Having defied the 17th century world of rigid convention he came to be recognized as one of its truly great figures. He met, providentially, with the requisite amount of opposition and injustice to test the purity of his character. Most of it came from the despicable jealousy of lesser men, resentful of a work being done other than under their immediate control, a work which they and their kind had notoriously neglected for centuries. But some of it came inevitably from good men, fearful of too much faith. There were a few occasions when he almost regretted his fidelity to his

vocation, when he wished ' that this chalice might pass from him ' ; ordinarily when one road was temporarily blocked to him, he set out without repining on on some alternative route.

As a history of the period, as a study of the origins of modern education, as a portrait of a courageous and loveable saint, this is in every way a most satisfying book.

Lancelot Sheppard's Life of St John Bosco tells once again the well established facts about this extraordinary man. This is not a new interpretation of the Saint's character, nor do the sources tapped warrant any such change. But the familiar facts are presented in straightforward and attractive style. It took a man very evidently backed by supernatural power to convince certain circles in nineteenth century Italy, and elsewhere, that boys could be taught and controlled through firm and good-humoured affection ; and that they were more likely to gain a lasting respect for priests who mixed with them and sympathized with them, than they ever got for the prim, aloof, suspicious and disapproving clerics who too often harrassed their youth. Signs and wonders backed the challenge of this revolutionary ; God stood by him in his effort to put into practice Fenelon's advice : ' Try to make the young delight in God.'

MICHAEL SWEETMAN

THE MASS THROUGH THE YEAR. Volume One : Advent to Palm Sunday. By Aemiliana Löhr. Translated from the German by I. T. Hale. London : Longmans, Green. Westminster, Md. : The Newman Press. 1958. xix + 330 pp. 30s.

Das Herrenjahr, by Dame Aemiliana Löhr of the Benedictine Abbey of Herstelle in Western Germany, was translated into English more than twenty years ago under the title *The Year of the Lord* (P. J. Kennedy, New York, 1937). Since then it has reached a fifth edition and has been considerably changed and enlarged and it is this new version which is now presented in a new English translation under the above title. The book is a commentary on the texts of the Mass-liturgy throughout the year ; it explains them in detail and in doing so provides much matter for meditation and spiritual reading. The present volume covers the first half of the ecclesiastical year : from the beginning of Advent to Palm Sunday ; there are commentaries on all the Sunday Masses, on those of the Advent Ember Days, the principal feasts of Our Lord and all the days of Lent. There is an Introduction by the late Dom Odo Casel, O.S.B., of the Abbey of Maria Laach, who was chaplain to the nuns of Herstelle and whom the author acknowledges in her Preface as her " teacher and master". The commentaries show a deep understanding of the liturgy and are intended for those who are already fairly familiar with the text of the Missal. Even among such this style of commentary on liturgical texts may not be everybody's line in meditation or spiritual reading. We think the publishers are decidedly optimistic when they say in the ' blurb ' that this is a book ' for every parish priest, religious teacher and parent'.

P. C. BARRY